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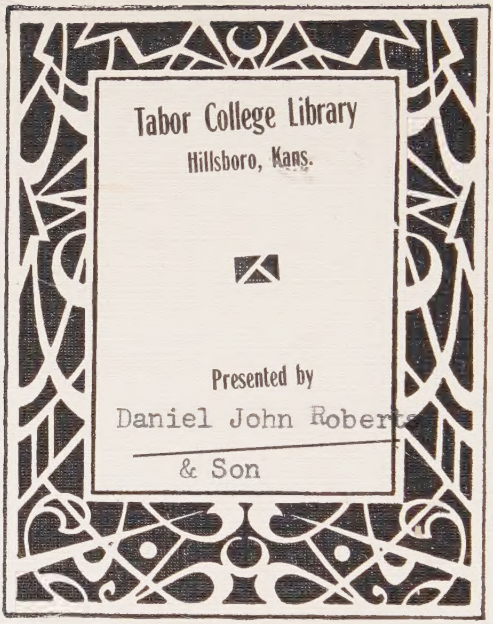

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THE HOLY LAND OF ASIA MINOR

THE
HOLY LAND OF ASIA MINOR

THE SEVEN CITIES OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION

THEIR PRESENT APPEARANCE, THEIR HISTORY,
THEIR SIGNIFICANCE,
AND THEIR MESSAGE TO THE CHURCH OF TO-DAY

BY

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Published September, 1914

TO THE MEMORY

OF

REV. EDWARD RIGGS, D.D.

FOR MANY YEARS AN HONORED MISSIONARY OF THE AMERICAN BOARD IN TURKEY, WHOSE COURTESY, PATIENCE, AND KNOWLEDGE OF THE NATIVE LANGUAGES SMOOTHED THE DIFFICULTIES OF OUR JOURNEY TO THE

SEVEN CITIES

AND WHO HAS SINCE TAKEN A LONGER JOURNEY TO THE NEW JERUSALEM, OF WHICH, ALSO, THE REVELATOR WROTE

TO

MRS. EDWARD RIGGS

AND TO

MY WIFE

MY OTHER TRAVELLING COMPANIONS IN THE

HOLY LAND OF ASIA MINOR

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED

INTRODUCTION

When we speak of the "Holy Land" we usually refer solely to the little section along the shores of the Mediterranean, called Palestine, which was trodden by the feet of our Lord and his immediate disciples. But there is another Holy Land and one scarcely less sacred to the Christian. It is the Holy Land of Asia Minor, especially its western part, which was comprised largely in the ancient province of Asia. Here the Apostles laboured and taught. Here some of the earliest churches were formed. Here martyrs suffered for their faith as in no other part of the world.

Over these hills (and a traveller in Asia Minor is never out of sight of them)

and along these river-courses Paul made his toilsome way, and Timothy and John Mark, and, in later years, Irenæus and Polycarp and others scarcely less distinguished in the history of the church.

Through the ports of Smyrna and Ephesus so many eminent Christians and church fathers sailed on their way to Rome and to death that they were called "The Gateways of the Martyrs."

Here Christianity received its earliest development as a universal religion, a faith for Jew and gentile alike.

Above all, it was here that the gentle Apostle who leaned on Jesus' breast planted his churches and watched over them with more than a father's solicitude, rejoicing in the steadfastness of some, mourning over the declension of others, and to them he wrote the messages inspired by the Spirit of God which have been for the encouragement, the comfort, the warning, the rebuke of the

churches in all the continents and in all the ages since.

In this Holy Land of Asia Minor, as we shall see, were the churches that epitomised all the churches of the future, and as to-day we wander beside the Meander and the Caicus and the golden Pactolus; as we stand beside the ruins of "Satan's Throne"; as we go through the "open door" to the Regions Beyond, which the church of Philadelphia entered and the church of Laodicea refused to enter; as we think of those who, among these hills and valleys, preached and wrought and suffered and lived and died for their Lord, and who have left their undying impress upon the churches in all the ages, we say to ourselves: "Take off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground."

It had long been my dream and hope that some time I might visit the site of

the Seven Cities of Asia. Recently, in connection with other duties, I was able to carry out my long-cherished design of visiting the sites of these seven historic cities. It was considered just at that time, in March, 1912, a somewhat foolhardy attempt by many of my friends, since Turkey was at war with her neighbours, her harbours were mined and in danger of bombardment, and an outbreak of cholera was threatened at any moment. However, the lions disappeared as they were faced, and we found no serious difficulty, though some hardships and many inconveniences, in visiting Ephesus and Smyrna, Pergamos and Thyatira, and Sardis and Philadelphia and Laodicea.

It is surprising how few people attempt to visit, at least in any consecutive manner, these cities of the Apocalypse. Jerusalem numbers its pilgrims by tens of thousands. Bethlehem, Nazareth, Da-

mascus have fewer, but still a great company each year. But the Seven Cities of Asia Minor to which the Alpha and Omega wrote wonderful messages, which were not for them alone but for the churches of all time, are seldom visited and still more seldom described. Libraries of volumes have been written about Jerusalem and the holy places of Palestine, but the literature of the holy places of Asia Minor is scanty indeed.

Ephesus, being but a short distance from the great port of Smyrna, is visited by many tourists, or at least many get as far as Ayasolouk, the railroad station three miles from the ruins of ancient Ephesus, though many of these tourists are satisfied with a hasty glimpse of the ruins of the Church of Saint John, so called, the few scattering marbles that mark the site of the ancient Temple of Diana, and a good dinner at the Ephesus Hotel, after which they return on a fast

train to Smyrna and the steamer which brought them there, having accomplished their hasty mission to one of the Seven Churches in the space of some five hours. Even the missionaries and Christian workers who live in the country have seldom been permitted by their arduous duties to visit these sites of such intense interest to the Christian. But such a journey now is altogether practicable.

Since the Young Turks came into power the former restrictions and annoyances that attended travel in Turkey have been largely removed. The Turkish custom-house has no longer any terror for the honest traveller. The officials are polite and courteous and are willing to give what information they possess. The meagre railway service of Turkey has been extended of late years so that the traveller can go by rail to six of the Seven Cities, and he can travel with as much safety to life and limb, if not with

as much comfort, as he can in England or America. On one line of railway, which is controlled by a British company, he can, by starting from Smyrna, visit Ephesus and Laodicea and the no less interesting Hierapolis, which lie to the south and east of Smyrna. By another line he can reach, in a few hours, Sardis and Philadelphia, which are almost directly east of Smyrna. Going north from Sardis, on a branch line, he comes to Thyatira. Northeast of Thyatira is Soma, the present terminus of this French line of railway. A six-hour journey from Soma by araba or on horseback brings him to Pergamos, where "Satan's Throne" was, the only one of the Seven Cities which is not directly on a railway line.

There are many by-products of such a journey which should not be forgotten, though not of chief interest to the Christian traveller. The scenery in which one finds himself in visiting the Seven

Churches is grand and picturesque, almost beyond the power of expression. The traveller is never far from lofty mountains, at some seasons of the year snow-capped, at other times cloud-capped, but always magnificently impressive. The curious serrated walls and battlements of the hills in the vicinity of Sardis and Philadelphia, worn by the gnawing tooth of time into a thousand fantastic shapes, are worth going far to see.

At other times the traveller finds himself journeying up the peaceful valley of the serpentine Meander, or crossing by stepping-stones the waters of the fabulously rich Pactolus, or looking down from the acropolis of Pergamos upon the beautiful green valley of the Caicus. He will see much that will interest him in the Turkish villages and larger towns, in the cosmopolitan population of the region, with its many types of humanity and its vast variety of costume. If he is not too

squeamish he will enjoy the nights in a Turkish khan, or a Greek hotel, or the restaurant where no one has the fear of microbes before his eyes, and where the edict against the pestiferous fly has not gone forth.

The archæologist will find more in this ancient province of Asia to interest him than in any similar portion of the earth's surface, more great cities of antiquity awaiting the pick and shovel of the excavater, more ruins of magnificent temples, palaces, gymnasiums, and theatres, than he can find elsewhere in the same space if he should search the world around.

But our interest in these chapters lies chiefly in the religious significance of the Seven Cities of Asia, for they still have a meaning and a message for every city in the world and for every Christian as well.

While this book is largely a record of personal experiences and conclusions,

the best authorities have been consulted, and the author desires to express his especial obligation to Sir William Ramsay, whose researches in Asia Minor and whose illuminating books have made the whole religious world his debtor.

Much of the material in these chapters was printed serially in the *Christian Herald*, and the kindly reception it received has induced the author to put it in more permanent form.

Boston, June, 1914.

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THE HOLY LAND OF ASIA MINOR

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CHAPTER I

THE REVELATOR AND THE REVELATION

How magnificently the message to the seven churches is prefaced: "Grace be unto you and peace," says the revelator, "from him which is and which was and which is to come, and from the seven spirits which are before the throne, and from Jesus Christ who is a faithful witness, and the first-begotten of the Head, and the prince of the kings of the earth." Was ever a series of letters begun in such an exalted strain! "The Alpha and the

Omega, the Beginning and the Ending, the Lord who is and was and is to come, the Almighty One," told the revelator what to write and what to send to Ephesus and Smyrna and Pergamos and Thyatira and Sardis and Philadelphia and Laodicea.

A pathetic interest is added to the preface to these letters in the personal and intimate word of greeting from John, the scribe of the Spirit, "your brother and companion in tribulation," as he calls himself, "and in the kingdom and patience of Christ." He had need of patience, indeed, for in his old age he had come to a period of the severest Roman persecutions, probably in the reign of Domitian, most cruel of persecutors. His punishment took place, we are told, "at a time when the penalty for Christianity was already fixed as death in the severer form, that is, by fire or crucifixion, or as a public spectacle at games

or festivals for persons of humbler profession or provincials, and simple execution for Roman citizens. . . . Banishment, combined with hard labour for life, was one of the grave penalties. Many Christians were punished in that way. It was a penalty for humbler criminals, provincials, and slaves. It was in its worst forms a terrible fate; like the death penalty it was preceded by scourging, and was marked by perpetual fetters, scanty clothing, insufficient food, sleep on the bare ground in a dark prison, and work under the lash of military overseers. It is an unavoidable conclusion that this was Saint John's punishment."

As we think of this fate, which would be so terrible for any one who was not "in the spirit" and who could not see the vision of the new heaven and the new earth, we find a new and tear-compelling pathos in the words: "Your companion in tribulation and in the

kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, who was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ."

Patmos is one of the group of islands called the Sporades. It is now called Patino, and lies twenty-four miles distant from the coast of Asia Minor, a little south of Ephesus. It is a tiny little islet compared with some of its larger neighbours, and has an area of only sixteen square miles and at present a population of four thousand souls. In John's time there were still fewer inhabitants. Yet before the days of recorded time the island was inhabited, for cyclopean remains are found there which show its prehistoric antiquity. It is said that in the Middle Ages it was called Palmosa because of its numerous palm-trees, but the traveller who to-day sees its scorched hillsides, its scanty, seared vegetation, and its forbidding

Photograph by Rev. Wm. H. Day, D.D.

Grotto of St. John, Isle of Patmos, in which, by tradition, he saw the visions in Revelation. The Monastery of St. John on the hill-top.

rocks can scarcely believe that it ever deserved this name.

There are not many things of great interest in Patmos except as the memory and the spirit of Saint John suffuses every landscape with his gentle spirit of love. There is, however, the Cave of the Apocalypse, in which, tradition tells us, the Apostle saw the vision which he has recorded in the last book of the New Testament. There is also the Monastery of Saint John, founded eight hundred years ago, which once contained an important and valuable library now found in the Bodleian Library at Oxford.

But it is not what Saint John saw in Patmos that interests us, but what he saw far away as he looked out from his island prison. Looking to the north and east, he could doubtless see the great mountains of Asia Minor, among which lay the seven churches to which the letters were written.

The scenery and situation of Patmos give us a key to much of the imagery of the book of Revelation. Patmos was one of the islands of an archipelago. High and rocky headlands could be seen on every side, and around all, shutting him in from country and plain and fellow disciples, was the mysterious sea, the real prison wall, mysterious and dangerous. As we think of this situation of the aged seer we can more fully understand his imagery when he tells us that "every mountain and island shall be moved out of their places"; "that every island fled away and the mountains were not found." Everywhere throughout Revelation we read of the sea: the things that are "in the heaven and in the earth and in the sea"; "the mountains which shall be cast into the sea"; "the angel that stood with his right foot upon the sea"; "the sound of many waters," and at last, toward the end, the revelation that must

have seemed so joyous to this sea-imprisoned saint, the revelation of the time when there shall be "no more sea."

In writing the Apocalypse Saint John adopted a common literary style of Jewish writers called the apocalyptic style. It was not exactly prophecy, though allied to prophecy, and the letters to the Seven Churches were not epistles intended to be read to the churches, but to be read together with the rest of the book of Revelation. The Seven Churches to which they were addressed stood as representatives of seven groups of churches, and yet all the Seven Churches were not of equal importance. Smyrna, Ephesus, and Pergamos were three of the great cities of Saint John's time; three of the mighty capitals of the world. Philadelphia and Thyatira were humbler cities, cities of the second class we should call them. Sardis had had a magnificent history and perhaps even then might have

been numbered with the three foremost cities already mentioned, though it had lost much of the ancient glory and importance which it had when it was the capital of Crœsus and of Cyrus the Great.

Laodicea lay at some distance from Ephesus, its nearest neighbour among the seven, and though by no means equal to the great four was an important centre of trade and commerce, not far from two other large centres with which the Bible also makes us familiar, Hierapolis and Colossæ.

The Seven Cities were evidently chosen not because they were all the greatest and most important, but because they were representative cities and each was a centre of other churches. It is supposed, too, that each of them was a postal centre; and, though the government had established no letter route, commercial houses had already done so, and the Christians of the different churches in

the vicinity followed their example and were in peculiarly close communication with the other churches in their particular group.

Each church had its own individuality, but each was also a representative of other churches, and it may be said that the seven epitomised all churches in all ages—churches which were ardent and faithful; churches that had lost their early enthusiasm; churches that harboured heresy and unbelief; churches that temporised with the world; churches that did not rebuke sin in its grossest forms; and, on the other hand, churches that maintained the faith, kept their early zeal aglow, reprobated the wrong, stood steadfast unto the end, and which should receive at last the crown of life. Such were the Seven Churches of Asia, and such are the seventy times seven thousand churches of to-day. In this universal quality lies the special interest

of the Seven Churches of Asia to us of the twentieth century. As the great French preacher, Bossuet, said when contemplating the book of Revelation: "All the beauties of the Scripture are concentrated in this book; all that is most touching, most vivid, most majestic in the law and in the prophets, receives here a new splendour and passes again before our eyes that we may be filled with the consolations and the graces of all past ages."

In succeeding chapters we will visit each of the Seven Cities, see them as they look to-day in their ruins or inhabited with their twentieth-century population; consider their present characteristics as we try to recall their ancient glories; look upon the mountains that tower above them, the streams that peacefully wend their way through them, and the unchanging yet ever-changing clouds and sky that bend above them; thus we hum-

bly hope to make more vivid and real to our readers the messages to the Seven Churches which were in Asia.

CHAPTER II

EPHESUS, THE CHURCH OF WANING ENTHUSIASM

I KNOW of no passage in the Bible which is more important for the modern church to read and ponder than the message to the ancient church in Ephesus. This church had many good points and is praised for its good works; nor is it condemned unqualifiedly in any respect as are some of the Seven Churches. But it had lost its first love. The fine enthusiasm of its earliest days, when Paul lived there and when Timothy, Aquila, Priscilla, Tychicus, and Apollos helped to mould its character, had evaporated.

This message was probably written some thirty years after the founding of

the church by Saint Paul. The luxury, the intellectual atmosphere of which the inhabitants were so proud, the spirit of criticism and unbelief, the natural accompaniment of such an atmosphere, the undue emphasis on Christian liberty, had all united to bring about a degeneration in the sturdy fibre of the early Christianity of the Ephesian church.

This church has ten thousand prototypes to-day. Churches that are active and zealous in philanthropies, whose benevolences are unstinted, whose patient continuance in well-doing is to be commended, and yet they have lost their enthusiasm, their joy in service, their aggressive, compelling power to awaken sinners and turn them to Christ.

In a recent article describing an attempt to evangelise a community where various social means were used to interest the people and where a Gospel address concluded the effort, the writer takes

much pains to declare that there was no emotion and to repeat that "emotional excitement was entirely absent." I imagine the same thing might have been said of the church of Ephesus. It had left its "first love"; it had lost its emotion, and, consequently, though it did good work and laboured with patience, it was not doing its "first works" with the zeal and love and holy joy of its earliest days.

The site of a church which has so much in common with many churches of these latter days is of peculiar interest. To visit it we started from the great seaport of Smyrna, where was situated also, as we remember, one of the Seven Churches of Revelation. The journey to Ephesus is by no means a long or arduous one. Indeed, so short and easy is it that more tourists by far visit the site of ancient Ephesus each year than all the other six together.

We take the train at the substantial Caravan Bridge station, in the heart of Smyrna. A score or more of two-horse public carriages are hurrying passengers, each with a great pile of miscellaneous baggage, to the station. Ragged camels, loaded with huge panniers on either side, dispute the way with the modern landaus. On the railway platform boys are selling the morning papers. Others tempt the passengers with large rings of bread hung upon a long pole, while others offer for sale rahatlakoum, or Turkish delight, or perhaps refresh the thirsty traveller with booza, a concoction far more harmless than its name sounds, or with silep, a drink made from orchid roots with a sprinkling of cinnamon and ginger on top.

Soon the train pulls into the station from Smyrna Point, and we take our seats in a comfortable car built mainly after the American style, though the train also

contains some small compartments for travellers who do not like to mingle with hoi polloi.

Our train may be said to start in a cemetery, for the Caravan Bridge station is barely outside of a great cypress grove which contains two large Turkish cemeteries with their leaning and dilapidated and altogether disreputable headstones. A minute or two after pulling out of the station we pass the burial-ground of the Jews, and another of the Christians, with beautiful monuments of white marble.

Every rod of the way has its peculiar interest to the traveller. Under frowning Mount Pagus, crowned with the ruins of the ancient citadel, the railway passes and ascends a lovely valley, through which chatters a beautiful brook. A magnificent aqueduct, built only two centuries ago, spans the valley, and higher up is a far older aqueduct which takes us back, perhaps, to Roman times.

At the first stop, four miles out of the city, the guard cries out: "Paradise! Paradise!" We are not looking for paradise in Turkey, but if any place in the Sultan's domains deserves the name it is doubtless this little station, for here are the fine buildings of the International College of Smyrna, an American Christian college manned by American teachers and built by liberal donations of American money. Here are gathered hundreds of students of different races and languages, to be trained not only in the lore of the schools but in the higher knowledge which is "the beginning of wisdom."

Every few miles we stop at some little Turkish town, but few of them have any special interest for the modern traveller, though each of them has a history that runs back thousands of years, and through each of them has probably passed victorious or defeated armies, marching

proudly in their triumph or straggling dejectedly in their defeat.

Everywhere are hills; the narrow valley through which we pass is by them guarded closely on every side. Everywhere, too—at least when we made the journey, in the early spring—are beautiful flowers. Gorgeous anemones, scarlet and purple and white, some of the blossoms as large as a silver dollar, make the banks of the railway gay.

After two and a half hours, some forty-eight miles from Smyrna, "Ayasolouk" is called by the guard with stentorian voice, and we find that we have come to the railway station of the Church of Waning Enthusiasms that Saint John and Saint Paul knew. Ayasolouk, which means "Holy Theologian" (referring to Saint John), is itself full of interesting ruins. Before we step off the railway train the great Roman aqueduct looms upon the landscape, an aqueduct so

enormous that it can be seen when many miles away. In the wretched little village of Ayasolouk, which now boasts only a few hundred inhabitants, the pillars of this aqueduct, forty-five feet tall, stand high above the huts like enormous monuments, on the tops of which the storks have built their nests and at the base of which they stalk about majestically, sure that their sacred character will protect them from harm.

Just beyond the columns of the mighty aqueduct we come to an ancient gate which leads to the ruins of the Church of Saint John, whose enormous size shows how huge was the basilica dedicated to the writer of Revelation, while not far away are the well-preserved ruins of a great Turkish mosque.

But the most interesting spot in Ayasolouk is that which once contained one of the seven wonders of the world, none other than the temple of "the great god-

dess Diana, whom all Asia and the inhabited earth worshippeth," as Demetrius, the silversmith, proclaimed. This is the temple concerning whose goddess the mob that would have killed Saint Paul cried out for the space of two hours in the theatre: "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." Or, more likely, it was an invocation to the goddess which they repeated vociferously for two hours: "Great Diana of the Ephesians!"

It is hard to realise as one looks at the few marbles that are left on the swampy site near Ayasolouk, stones often covered with water, that this could have been the site of one of the wonders of the world, a temple that rivalled in magnificence, if it did not excel, the Taj Mahal of Agra, the most perfect example of ecclesiastical architecture that the world knows to-day.

We must hurry on to the ruins of the Roman city of Ephesus, some two miles beyond Ayasolouk. Here one who longs

to follow in the footsteps of the saints feels that he is indeed on holy ground. Much of the ancient city has been excavated. On these marble pavements, doubtless, Paul and Apollos walked, perhaps arm in arm, as they talked over the affairs of the infant church and the progress of the kingdom of the Master whom they loved. Over these pavements, too, doubtless, John walked in rapt contemplation of the things which afterward he might reveal. According to the ancient legend, which, unlike many legends, has marks of verisimilitude, in his extreme old age the saint was carried through the streets of the city day by day, saying to his disciples: "Little children, love one another!"

The poet Eastwood has beautifully told this story in his lines about Saint John the Aged:

"What say you, friends?
That this is Ephesus and Christ has gone

Back to His kingdom? Ay, 'tis so, 'tis so:
I know it all: and yet, just now, I seemed
To stand once more upon my native hills,
And touch my master. . . .
Up! Bear me to my church once more,
There let me tell them of a Saviour's love:
For by the sweetness of my Master's voice
I think He must be very near.

"So, raise up my head:
How dark it is! I cannot seem to see
The faces of my flock. Is that the sea
That murmurs so, or is it weeping? Hush!
'My little children! God so loved the world
He gave His Son: so love ye one another,
Love God and men. Amen.' "

In one of these side streets which lead out of the main marble thoroughfare very likely Priscilla and Aquila wrought at their trade, perhaps with Paul's help, during the long winter evenings.

There are so many spots of supreme historical and Biblical interest about Ephesus that a volume might be written, as many volumes have been written in the past, about this most fascinating

Ruins of the Double Church of Ephesus.

city. Here is the great "Double Church," so called, where one of the important councils of the church was held. Here are ruins of tombs, one of which is called the tomb of Saint Luke, and the temples of many gods, the ruins of the agora, or market-place, of the great gymnasium, of the stadium where the Grecian youths exercised themselves, more in physical than intellectual life, somewhat according to the custom of the youth of our own day.

But perhaps the most interesting of these perfect ruins is that of the great theatre, capable of seating 24,500 people. As in all these old theatres, the seats followed the semicircular excavation in the hillside. The marble slabs on which the people of Ephesus sat as they witnessed the games have been taken away, though it is not difficult to mark their former position. In the proscenium are heaped together in endless confusion

capitals and friezes and drums of columns and architraves. Here it was that the mob shouted their praise of Diana for two long hours. Here it was that at last the town clerk of Ephesus quieted the people by telling them that every one knew that Ephesus was the temple-keeper of the great goddess Diana and of the image that fell down from Jupiter, and thus, by his shrewd opportunism and appeal to their religious pride, he quieted the people, assuring them that Paul and his companions were neither robbers of temples nor yet blasphemers of the goddess, and that Demetrius, if he had anything against them, could prosecute them in the courts.

As we stand in the theatre to-day we can hear in imagination the hoarse shouts of the angry mob as they monotonously invoked the goddess. We can hear the politic words of the town clerk and see Alexander the Jew vainly trying to gain

Ruins of the theatre, Ephesus.

a hearing from the people who would not listen to a despised Israelite.

But the message in Revelation comes to a church that has escaped its early dangers, and that, likewise, as is often the case, has lost its early enthusiasm. In Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians there is no indication that he noticed any spiritual declension. His words are words of confidence and approbation, quite different from his letter to the Galatians and the Colossians.

But a generation had passed when Saint John wrote the book of Revelation, and though their works and the labour and the patience of the Ephesian church and its reprobation of evil are still known, yet the Master has somewhat against it. It had lost its first love. "No evil is more marked among the Christian churches of this day," said Horace Bushnell, "than precisely the absence of this spirit of burning which the Ephesians

lacked. There is plenty of liberality and effort, there is much interest in religious questions, there is genial tolerance and wide culture, there is a high standard of morality and, on the whole, a tolerable adherence to it, but there is little love and little fervour. Where is that Spirit which was poured out on Pentecost? Where are the cloven tongues of fire? Where the flames that Christ died to light up?"

For this lack of its earlier and more fervent zeal the Ephesian church is warned to remember whence it has fallen and to repent and do the first works, or else the Master will come quickly and remove the candlestick out of its place. This threatened penalty has been understood to mean not an utter destruction of the church of Ephesus but as indicating that the church would be removed to another spot. Grotius interprets it: "I will cause thy population to flee away to another place."

Sir William Ramsay characterises Ephesus as the "city of change." And truly it has seen marvellous changes and its inhabitants many removals. In the days of Saint Paul and Saint John Ephesus was a city of the seacoast; the waters of the Ægean lapped its busy wharves; now the traveller in Ephesus cannot imagine that he is near the sea. To all appearances he is as far away as on one of our inland prairies. The Cayster during all these ages has brought down mud and silt from the mountains until now Ephesus is miles from the seashore. Even in Saint John's time the port was kept open only by strenuous effort and constant dredging.

These changes wrought by nature have compelled frequent changes on the part of the inhabitants. "The original city was built not far from Ayasolouk, and the whole Ephesian valley was an arm of the sea dotted with rocky islands and bordered by picturesque mountains and

wooded promontories," we are told. As the sea receded in the course of the centuries the population moved with it, until the Roman city, the city of Saint Paul and Saint John, was some miles from the original site. At last this port became impossible, and the inhabitants moved farther back, nearer to the site of the more ancient city, where to-day the few inhabitants that still remain are found.

In its government as well as its situation Ephesus has been a city of change. Among the earliest inhabitants the Phœnicians introduced their religion, and the people worshipped the symbol of the moon as the goddess of the sea; the priests were named "king bees" and the priestesses "bees," and bands of armed women as well as men—for suffragettes then had all their rights—formed the temple guard.

Then came the Ionians, a thousand

years before Christ, who had to fight with the armed virgins, afterward known as Amazons. Following them came the Greeks as conquerors, who in turn were conquered by Crœsus, and he by Cyrus the Great and later by Xerxes. Then came Alexander the Great as the ruler of the world, who made Ephesus one of its chief capitals. Octavius Cæsar with Mark Antony, after the battle of Philippi, were the rulers of the city. Under all these monarchs it maintained its pre-eminence, and the great temple of Diana was its chief glory. The Ephesians were even proud of the title of Neocori, or "Temple-Sweepers" of the great Diana.

In Christian times it was important ecclesiastically and politically, and in the Middle Ages the Church of Saint John at Ayasolouk was almost as famous as the old temple of Diana. Its annual revenues amounted to nearly one hundred thousand dollars. Then came the Turks

in the twelfth century, and there they have been ever since. Truly it has been a city of change in every sense of the word. The Lord's prophecy has been fulfilled, and the "lamp of the church," as the "candlestick" should be translated, with its light and glory, has been removed out of its place.

For a time the warning of Saint John seemed to have had a good effect. The church was revived and regained its first love, according to Ignatius, but in later centuries it again lost its enthusiasm and its devotion; and at last the Mohammedan crescent supplanted the Christian cross. The church was, indeed, removed out of its place and that forever. Every memorial that there was once a church there has departed, and not one Christian family now lives in the desolation, the dry land, and the wilderness that Ephesus has become.

CHAPTER III

SMYRNA, THE CITY OF THE NOBLE CROWN

It is an interesting fact, and perhaps not altogether without genuine spiritual significance, that Smyrna, the only city of the seven except Philadelphia whose church receives from the Master unqualified praise, is also the only city of the seven which is to-day great and prosperous. Next to Constantinople, it is the largest and most important city of the Turkish Empire. Its situation, too, is almost as fine as the peerless site of the city on the Bosphorus.

Seated majestically on rising ground on the southeast shore of the Gulf of Smyrna, it seems as one looks from its wharves as though built on the banks

of a great inland lake. A large island blocks the view as one gazes out to the Ægean, and yet the entrance is so deep and safe, and the harbour itself so spacious, that, according to the hackneyed saying, the navies of the world can ride at the water-front of Smyrna.

To be sure, the city has no mighty Olympus to keep guard over it as has Salonica; it has no narrow thoroughfare through which constantly ply the vessels of many nations as has Constantinople; but it has glories all its own. Splendid mountains surround it on almost every side. Mount Pagus, the old citadel of Smyrna, up whose steep side many of the houses of modern Smyrna are climbing, is like a great fist, as some one has expressed it, thrust out by the hills behind the city and connected with the mountain ranges to the south—a fist which in the early days, when crowned with a mighty fortress and manned by

Ancient Roman aqueduct, near Smyrna.

tens of thousands of soldiers, seemed to be shaken threateningly in the face of every invader.

I have approached Smyrna both from the sea and from the land, and whether one journeys across the Ægean from Athens, after an eighteen hours' voyage, or comes overland from Constantinople by rail, a long two days' journey, he is impressed not only with the picturesqueness of the situation but also by the seeming vigour and vitality of the city. Though Smyrna claims to be at least three thousand five hundred years old, and her recorded history goes back for nearly three thousand years, she is as alert, enterprising, and busy as though she had her birth in the last century, on one of our own great lakes, instead of on the shore of the oldest sea of the civilised world.

Let us in imagination go ashore from one of the great black steamers of the

Messageries Maritime. We land on a noisy, bustling quay alongside of which runs a little horse-railway. Great ships from most of the leading ports of the world are tied up to the quay by their stern. On the other side of this broad street, the only one in Smyrna to which this adjective can be applied, are large warehouses and one or two pretentious hotels.

Passing through a cross street, we come to the great business artery of Smyrna, the so-called "Frank Street," which has doubtless obtained its name from the fact that so many Franks, a generic name for foreigners, do business on it. This street is only fifteen feet wide, and yet it is the chief business thoroughfare of a city of a quarter of a million inhabitants. Two people stretching out their arms and touching hands in the middle could span the street, and yet through it hurries a constant stream of foot-passengers, dash-

ing cabs, stately camels, donkeys and donkey-boys, beasts of burden and men of burden, carrying every conceivable article that people of the Orient or the Occident might want; for this is one of the chief cities where East and West meet on a common footing.

At its upper end Frank Street debouches into one of the ever-fascinating Oriental bazaars. A celebrated English author speaks of these bazaars as "a network of narrow, ill-paved, dirty lanes" forming the great business centre of Smyrna. Everything is sold in these dismal quarters, he says, "and they doubtless give a faithful picture, in the unchanging East, of the Smyrna of the days of the Apostles."

There is no doubt that these bazaars are narrow, ill paved, and dirty, but they cannot be said to be dismal, for there is no mart of trade in all the world that has more kaleidoscopic changes, more bril-

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liant colours, or, to the stranger, more interesting people than the bazaars of Smyrna. Here every trade is being carried on under your very eye; all the goods, so to speak, are in the shop-windows. Not that there are any shop-windows or windows of any other kind in these bazaars, which are lighted from the open ends and from apertures in the roof, but every merchant has brought all his goods to the front, and usually sits cross-legged behind them, waiting for a customer, while he sips his thick coffee and reads the paper or the Koran.

Some of the bazaar merchants of Smyrna, however, are more enterprising than their brethren in other cities, and send out touts and barkers to induce you to patronise their shops, especially those who, to tempt the unsophisticated foreigner, deal in curios, ancient armour, antiquated daggers and weapons, all of which very likely were made day before

yesterday. It is hard to shake off these persistent salesmen, who plead with you a thousand times over to "Come, visit my shop? Very fine antikkers. You no need buy anything; you just look!" If, however, one is beguiled to go and look, he will find it exceedingly difficult to get away from the wily, persistent merchant without buying some trinkets for which he will afterward find but little use.

Jewellers and money-changers, rug-dealers and saddlers, spice-merchants and sellers of figs and dates and oranges and grains, shoe-stores and fez-shops, hardware and dry-goods and guns, are all mixed up in endless confusion, or at least appear so to the newcomer. At one end of the bazaar we hear a tremendous din, as though we were approaching a dozen boiler-shops, but we find that we are only drawing near to the copper bazaar, where the workmen are laboriously pounding out bowls and platters

and water-pots and saucepans and dishes of all shapes and sizes. Through these bazaars drivers with two-horse phaetons are constantly charging, and the unlucky foot-passenger must flatten himself against the wall to avoid being crushed either by a carriage or a loaded camel. All sorts of vehicles and four-footed creatures as well as human bipeds are straggling or rushing through the shops instead of through the streets where they would seem to belong.

Not far from the bazaars is Fish-market Street, another interesting though somewhat unsavoury and ill-smelling thoroughfare. Here fine mackerel, sole, and cod have to compete for popularity with the humble squid, the hideous devil-fish, the octopus, and the inky cuttlefish. The streets are all narrow and tortuous, and there are fewer fine buildings, mosques, and churches than either in Salonica or Constantinople.

Two famous mosques of Smyrna.

Architecturally Smyrna must have degenerated since the ancient days, for we are told that then the streets were broad and handsome, well paved and running at right angles with each other. There were then a number of squares and porticoes and public libraries, a museum, a stadium in which Olympic games were celebrated with great enthusiasm, a grand music-hall or Odeion, a Homerion, and many temples, of which the most famous was that of the Olympian Jupiter, in which the reigning emperor was practically the god worshipped.

The ancient Smyrniotes were inordinately proud of their city; they called it the "First of Asia," though the Ephesians violently disputed this claim. The inhabitants also called their city the "City of Homer," who they claimed had been born and brought up beside their sacred river Meles. They put his image upon their coins, which they called a Home-

rion, a name also given to one of their temples.

A paragraph from Apollonius of Tyana is worth quoting, not only for the beautiful sentiment it contains, but because it shows the esteem in which ancient Smyrna was held by famous writers of the day. "Though it is the most beautiful of all cities under the sun," he writes, "and makes the sea its own, and holds the fountains of Zephyrus, yet it is a greater charm to wear a crown of men than a crown of porticoes, and pictures and gold beyond the standard of mankind, for buildings are seen only in their own place, but men are seen everywhere and spoken about everywhere, and make their cities as vast as the range of countries which they can visit."

This allusion of the ancient writer to the crown of porticoes suggests the most imposing characteristic of ancient Smyrna, a characteristic to which the writer of

Revelation evidently alludes, and that was the crown of noble towers and fortresses and other buildings that surmounted Mount Pagus, the mighty acropolis of Smyrna. "Ælius Aristides, who himself lived in Smyrna," says Sir William Ramsay, "compares the city as the ideal city on earth to the crown of Ariadne shining in the heavenly constellation. He can hardly find language strong enough to paint the beauty of the crown of Smyrna. Several of his highly ornate sentences become clearer when we note that he is expressing in a series of variations the idea of a crown resting on the summit of the hill."

Mount Pagus is still there, but its crown has largely disappeared. Enormous fragments still remain, to be sure, showing what tremendous buildings once occupied the broad plateau on the summit of the acropolis, and, as one rebuilds in imagination these wonderful piles, he

can easily forgive the Smyrniotes of old for their grandiloquent praise of their lovely city and its beautiful crown.

On the side of this crowned hill is the most interesting spot for the Christian pilgrim to-day, the tomb of the martyr Polycarp, who, in the middle of the second century, was here burned at the stake. He was the Bishop of Smyrna and disciple of Saint John himself. Irenæus, who was Bishop of Lyons at the close of the second century, was the pupil of Polycarp and writes about him most lovingly and touchingly. Thus we have unbroken links in a chain of testimony extending through two centuries which take us back to Christ himself: Irenæus the disciple of Polycarp, Polycarp the disciple of Saint John, Saint John the disciple of Christ. Who does not cherish the beautiful saying of the aged bishop, when on the stadium of Smyrna at two o'clock of a Saturday

afternoon in the year 156, as the flames mounted around him and he was asked to save his life by renouncing Christ, he cried out: "Eighty and six years have I served Him, and He has done me no ill; how then can I blaspheme my King who hath saved me."

The traditional spot of his martyrdom is now guarded by a great cypress-tree, and under this is a green-painted Mohammedan tomb with a marble fez, the Moslem embellishment of a grave, on the top, and this is said to be Polycarp's tomb! It seems strange and sad that even his traditional resting-place should be in a Turkish cemetery and in a Turkish tomb, for he belongs pre-eminently to the Christian church, though the Moslems also regard him as a famous saint. "Polycarpa Tomba! Polycarpa Tomba!" cried a little black girl as we approached the tomb. These were her two English words, though she was

abundantly familiar with the word "backshish," and followed us half a mile from the tomb, begging for a few more paras.

Some forty years before he died, Polycarp wrote an epistle to the Philippians, in which he quotes profusely from the apostolic writings, showing that they were well known in the Christian church only a few years after the death of Saint John.

Ephesus was called "the passageway of the martyrs," because through Ephesus most of them passed on their way to die at Rome. But Smyrna, also, was a highway of the martyrs, and through this city the great Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, passed to his glorious death at Rome. Here he was met and comforted by the Christians of Smyrna, and in writing back to Polycarp he says: "I give exceeding glory that it hath been vouchsafed me to see thy blameless face."

We have been describing modern Smyr-

na and old Smyrna, but there was an older Smyrna still, for the most ancient city was said to have been founded by Tantalus some three thousand five hundred years before Christ at the extreme end of the bay, some three or four miles from the modern city, which was also the site of the city of Polycarp and Saint John. As I climbed the rough and rugged hill, leaping from boulder to boulder, dodging the prickly shrubs where the hardy goats alone can find any sustenance, I felt that indeed I was getting back to ancient days, as I gazed at the so-called tomb of Tantalus and the cyclopean wall which surrounds it, which antedates the records of historic times.

Two characteristics of Smyrna, it has been pointed out by eminent authorities, are alluded to in the beautiful commendatory words of Saint John. A thousand years before Christ Smyrna was a great Grecian city, but it was conquered and

destroyed, wiped off the face of the map indeed, by the Lydian King Alyates about six hundred years before Christ. Smyrna was dead, and yet, though the city was destroyed, it lived, for there were many villages round about the ancient city that constituted a state named Smyrna. The One who sends the message to Smyrna through John is spoken of as the One "who was dead and is alive," alluding, of course, to our Lord's death and resurrection, and perhaps with a secondary allusion to the city which for hundreds of years was dead and then lived again, for the writer in a wonderful way makes every part of the message, even the inscription, appropriate to the history and the situation of the city to which he writes.

Not a word of censure or a suggestion of blame is found in this message. This absence of reproof it shares alone with the message to the church of Philadel-

phia. But it was not a rich church in the usual sense of the word. The Revelator knew its poverty and its tribulations as well as its good works. And here is inserted that significant and beautiful parenthesis, "but thou art rich"—rich in good works, rich in heavenly treasure, rich in the truest kinds of wealth.

Then the writer predicts the sufferings which would surely come to this noble church: "The devil shall cast some of you into prison that ye may be tried, and ye shall have tribulation ten days." Ten days is a limited period of time which will come to an end. The tribulation is not hopeless and measureless. Even if death comes it matters little, as was proven in the case of Polycarp and many another martyr in the awful persecutions of those terrible years of suffering.

Then comes the glorious reward. "Be thou faithful unto death," faithful as

Smyrna had been to the Roman power, with which she had early thrown in her lot and been known as the "faithful city" during all the vicissitudes and the many changes of Roman rule. So be thou faithful to thy religion and thy Master, says the Revelator, "and I will give thee the crown of life"; a nobler crown than that which surmounted the citadel of Mount Pagus; a nobler crown than the splendid fortresses and buildings to which every citizen of Smyrna looked up with admiration and pride; a nobler crown even than Apollonius described when he told them it was a "greater charm to wear a crown of men than a crown of porticoes"—*even the crown of life*, which should be given to the faithful church by him who was the First and the Last, who was dead and yet lived again.

This, too, is a message that every Christian may well take to heart. The

poor, those who have much tribulation and suffering, those who are ostracised, as were the Christians of Smyrna by the Jews who belonged to the synagogue of Satan, all these sons and daughters of men, yea, all true Christians, may well take to heart these words: "Be thou faithful even unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life. He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death."

CHAPTER IV

PERGAMOS, THE CITY OF SATAN'S SEAT

We left Soma, the terminus of one branch of the Anatolian Railway, early one bright February morning for Pergamos, or Pergamum as it is called in the revision, the ancient capital and most important city of the province of Asia. Soma is a good place to get away from, and, to vary a modern gibe, concerning Boston, of which New York people are fond, the best thing about Soma was the araba which took us away from it. This araba is a strong spring cart, covered with dirty white canvas, looking not unlike a butcher's cart. It has no seats and our two missionary friends and

ourselves piled our suitcases, our rugs, and other *impedimenta* in the bottom of the araba to afford as comfortable seats as possible for the bouncing, jolting journey of forty-two kilometres that lay before us. Our driver was a picturesque-looking Greek, sad and gloomy but handsome and with a Byronic cast of feature. But his actions were not as handsome as his face and he proved, before we were through with him, to be a grasping rascal.

Pergamos is the only one of the seven cities that must be reached by araba or on horseback, for all the rest lie within walking distance of one of the three lines of railway in Turkey. The February air was crisp but not too cold, for spring comes early in this part of Asia Minor. The apricot and peach-trees were in full bloom and the almond-trees flourished on every side, reminding us of Solomon's description of the hoary head of the aged saint.

The ride is a charming one, so far as the scenery is concerned, and if as much could be said for the road over which we travelled one could not wish a more delightful journey than that from Soma to Pergamos. But like all Turkish roads the highway in many parts is abominable. There are stretches of decent road alternating with other stretches which are quite indescribable, where the araba sways and pitches and rolls like a ship in a heavy sea. Much of the way we seemed to be on the edge of a great natural bowl or saucer, with the valley below us and the outer rim of the bowl on the opposite horizon. In the early morning and in the sunset light the purple hills in the distance are beautiful beyond comparison. Especially in the evening a long afterglow illumines them, a glow even more characteristic of Asia Minor than of Switzerland.

We pass many groves of olive-trees

and others of mulberries, while cherries and peach orchards abound in many places. This is a cotton country too, and the bolls of last year's crop, a few still ungathered, decorate the dried stalks. Now and then we pass a rude little Turkish village, heralded in advance, usually, by a cemetery filled with cypress-trees and dilapidated tombstones.

As we drive farther from Soma small streams become more numerous and we rattle across many rude wooden bridges, unless our arabaji prefers to drive through the stream in order to tighten up his tires and lave the feet of his tired horses. Kilometre after kilometre is passed and at last a turn in the road shows us a glorious spectacle—the lofty citadel of ancient Pergamos, the city which for some hundreds of years was the most noted, wealthy, and powerful metropolis in the whole province of Asia. A noted traveller and archæologist writes:

"History marked it out as the royal city, and not less clearly has nature done so. No city of the whole of Asia Minor, so far as I have seen, and there are few of any importance which I have not seen, possesses the same imposing and dominating aspect. It is the one city of the land which forced from me the exclamation: 'A royal city!' There is something unique and overpowering in its effect, planted as it is on its magnificent hill, standing out boldly in the level plain, and dominating the valley and the mountains on the south." *

Though I can scarcely share to the full Sir William Ramsay's enthusiasm for the site of Pergamos, it is certainly striking and imposing, and still more so when viewed as he viewed it in the light of its splendid history.

For twenty-five hundred years a city, larger or smaller, has stood upon the

* Sir William Ramsay.

slope of this commanding hill or nestled at its feet, but it was not until three centuries before Christ that Philetærus revolted from King Lysimachus, whose vassal he was, and founded the kingdom of Pergamos. A succession of brilliant kings named Attalus reigned in Pergamos, and the last of them, Attalus III, when he saw that the Roman power was to become dominant throughout the world, made over by will his kingdom to the Roman Emperor. Then it became the "Province of Asia," to which frequent allusion is made in the Bible, and Pergamos for two centuries and a half more was the capital of this great province.

A fact most interesting to us in studying the history of the seven churches of Asia—and, by the way, all these Seven Churches were situated within the borders of the ancient kingdom of Pergamos—is the fact that the first temple where the

Emperor was worshipped in any provincial Roman city was Pergamos. Here, about thirty years before Christ, was built this splendid temple in honour of Rome and Augustus, and to it was brought in after years many a Christian who was commanded to worship the statue of the Emperor and burn incense before it. If he refused, the most awful fate probably awaited him—martyrdom by burning at the stake. Or perhaps he would be transported to Rome and there thrown to the wild beasts in the Colosseum.

When we remember these facts, and that this temple was the place where idolatrous worship was enforced by all the mighty power of Rome, we can understand why Saint John, the Revelator, should call it "Satan's Seat," or "Satan's Throne." Pergamos had long been a peculiarly idolatrous city. The native Anatolians worshipped animal gods, and

Ruins of the gateway to the theatre of Pergamos. The city is seen through the archway in the distance.

though, when the Greeks came, they introduced more spiritual or at least more artistic divinities like Jupiter, Minerva, and Æsculapius, yet the animal gods still were worshipped by the common people, the natives of the province. One of the coins of Pergamos represents Caracalla, the Emperor, adoring the serpent god at Pergamos. Another coin represents a serpent wriggling out of the mystic box of Dionysos.

Another characteristic of Pergamos was that its governor had the right of life and death. He had absolute authority to kill or to spare, and in Saint John's time this absolute authority with which the ruler of Pergamos was invested was bitterly hostile to the Christians. The one who wielded the power of life and death, the *Jus gladii*, or the right of the sword, hated them with a cruel hatred.

All of these facts we must bear in mind as we study the words of the Revelator,

the one who styled himself, when he wrote to the angel of the church at Pergamos, as "He that hath the sharp sword with the two edges," an evident reference to the right of the sword possessed by the proconsul of Pergamos.

It may be of passing interest to know that Pergamos to-day seems to be the seat of a considerable manufacture of cutlery and swords, and one of the mementoes which I have brought away from the modern city was not a sharp sword but a sharp knife with two edges of a style such as I have seen in no other part of the world.

The Revelator goes on to say to the beleaguered Christians in this idolatrous city, "I know where thou dwellest, even where Satan's throne is," the great Temple of Rome and Augustus, where is set up the image of the Emperor before which the inhabitants bow down and to which they burn incense as a sign of

their loyalty to him. But even there where Satan's throne is "thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith."

These must have been precious, comforting words to the faithful few. One of these faithful ones is singled out and mentioned by name: "Antipas, my faithful witness, who was slain among you where Satan dwelleth." But doubtless there was many another Christian who shared the same fate, perhaps hundreds of them brought from all the country around and taken to "Satan's throne" to be tested as to the reality of their faith in Jesus Christ. Alas! all the Christians of Pergamos were not like Antipas, and the One that hath the sharp sword, because of them, had a "few things" against the church in Pergamos.

Those that held the doctrines of Balaam were largely represented in the church. Doubtless these doctrines were

the same as those of the Nicolaitans, who were elsewhere denounced.

They were the lax, yielding Christians of their day, who found it easy to conform to the ways of the world and the temptations of the time. They had little of the Puritan blood in their veins, and they could easily excuse themselves, doubtless, not only for eating things sacrificed to idols but for occasionally bowing before the statue of the Emperor and burning a little incense before it.

"The Lord knows," they doubtless said, "that we are simply showing our loyalty to Rome by conforming to the custom of the day. The Emperor is a mere man and his image we do not worship, but only bow before it to show our obedience to the authority of our Emperor."

Doubtless the Nicolaitans of those days had quite as many excuses for their worldly practices as the Nicolaitans of

modern times. But to them comes the sharp and terrible reproof: "Repent or else I will come unto thee quickly and fight against thee with the sword of my mouth."

But to the faithful members of the church in Pergamos comes a blessed and appropriate reward. The "hidden manna" was to be theirs, which they might eat and gain strength for their terrible trials. According to Jewish history, King Josiah, or the prophet Jeremiah, when Solomon's temple was destroyed, hid a pot of manna which the Israelites had gathered in the wilderness, and had kept it in the holy of holies that it might not be captured by Nebuchadnezzar's army. What became of this pot of manna was the subject of different traditions—one that it had been carried up into heaven, another that it was concealed in a cave of Mount Sinai to be revealed when the Messiah came.

But more significant still was the white stone which was to be given to the Christian who did not deny his Lord, even in Satan's seat. In the stone was his new name. It was an old Jewish custom, when a man was sick even unto death, as it was supposed, to give him another name by which, if he recovered, he was known throughout the rest of his life. To those who were faithful, who overcame the sharpness of death and were not afraid of its terrors, a new name was to be given, written upon the white stone, a name showing that they were Christians. This very word itself was a new name, given not many years before at Antioch to this despised and persecuted sect.

What do we find at Pergamos to-day? We see, in fact, two cities: a city of ruins without a single inhabitant and a city of the living, now called Bergama, mean and squalid, to be sure, in comparison

with its ancient glory, but busy and bustling and interesting as a typical centre of modern Greek and Turkish life. Long caravans of camels march through its streets in almost endless procession, loaded with wood charcoal, chick-peas, millet, wheat, sesame, lentils, leeks, carrots, black turnips, chopped hay, and other kinds of produce. The bazaars are gay with bright cloths, wadded jackets, embroidered saddle-bags, tinsel ornaments for the heads of women, and all sorts of cheap jewellery that Birmingham or Attleboro can furnish.

The streets are paved with cobblestones set on edge and are horrible for the pedestrian. A sewer runs down the middle of each street, and garbage and refuse of all kinds are thrown out of every doorway for the pariah dogs to fight over. There seem to be as many dogs as men, most of them miserable, depressed creatures who fight with one another over

a swill-pail or lie curled up in the sun by the hour together.

One of the most attractive features of Bergama are the fountains, and many an old sarcophagus beautifully sculptured on every side is now used as a watering-trough. Veiled Turkish women with the tips of their noses showing, unveiled Greek women, and a multitude of men in baggy blue trousers are the principal people whom one meets on the street. In the provision-shops one sees groceries of various kinds: oranges, dates, and peanuts; leeks, onions, and garlic; spinach, turnips, and potatoes; long strings of dried okra, cauliflower, and cabbages; dried squid and devil-fish from the Ægean, and the various kinds of helva in which the Turkish heart delights.

Such a modern city, however, you might find almost anywhere in Turkey, but no other such city as the ancient Pergamos do you find the wide world

Some modern Pergamonians.

around. Climb with me the steep slope of the ancient citadel, at first through the narrow street lined with the stone huts of modern Pergamenians, and very soon we come to the borders of the ancient walled city.

More than thirty years ago the Germans began to excavate ancient Pergamos and made some wonderful finds, most of which are transported to the Pergamenian museum in Berlin, but still there is much left to remind the traveller of the glorious city on whose grave he is walking. There are many white stones lying about on every hand, not the white pebbles of which the revelator spoke, on which the new name was to be written, but great masses of marble, fine capitals beautifully carved, lofty columns, some standing erect and others prostrate, with their drums scattered about. A few headless torsos and fragments of arms and legs strew the ground. Here is a

great gymnasium, covering many rods in length, with many beautiful columns still standing, where the Grecian youths exercised themselves in games of all sorts, and there the remains of a stately old palace.

Above this, on a higher slope, are theatres and temples, the great altar of Zeus, of which there is nothing left but an enormous base of solid masonry. Still higher up on the hill is the Temple of Athenæ Polias, a library, and beyond this, perhaps the most interesting spot of all to the Christian, the ruins of the Temple of Rome and Augustus, "Satan's Seat" or "Satan's Throne," where the cruel test which meant either death or denial of their Lord was offered to so many Christians. Not far away are the ruins of the Temple of Julia and, most massive of all, a magnificent piece of the acropolis wall, built of enormous stones, fully a hundred feet in height and but-

tressing part of the hill itself and extending some feet above it.

No description can give the reader an adequate account of these extensive ruins. They cover acres and acres and acres. To see them all one must wander for miles over rough and steep paths, often climbing over huge fragments of marble and masonry, mute relics of past glories.

The view from the summit is far more beautiful and scarcely less impressive than the ruins themselves. Fifteen miles away one catches a glimpse of the bright waters of the Ægean. In the nearer distance rise three great tumuli some hundreds of feet in height, the graves of forgotten kings. Pausanias, writing nineteen hundred years ago, tells us that they are the tombs of Auge, the mother of Telephus, of Andromache, and of Pergamos.

Close to the base of the citadel lies

the modern town, which we have already described, but it looks better from a distance, and its fifteen slender minarets relieve the city of the sordid appearance which it presents when one is in its crowded streets.

The most striking ruin within the confines of the modern town is a vast library of Roman times. This reminds us that our word parchment is derived from the name Pergamos or Pergamum, where sheepskins were first tanned for literary purposes. In this library, it is said, were stored no less than two hundred thousand volumes, or rolls of parchment, which Mark Antony gave to Cleopatra in order that her great library at Alexandria might not be surpassed by the library of Pergamos.

Beyond the city stretches the wide and beautiful valley of the Caicus, charming as we saw it in the greenery and blossoms of early spring, and hemmed in

Ruins of Roman bath of Pergamos, dating from early Christian times. Part of this bath is used as a Greek Orthodox church to-day.

on the farther side by glorious mountains that stretch far up toward the clouds.

A little touch of homely modern life did our hearts good as we stood upon the ancient citadel, for some young girls from the modern town had come up to the ruins with their baskets of provisions to enjoy a picnic amid the marble columns. Here they played "Drop the handkerchief," "Puss, puss in the corner," and other games as familiar to the children of America as to the descendants of the ancient Pergamenians. From a spot of greensward below came the voices of many smaller children that sounded pleasantly as they mingled with the tinkling of the distant camel bells, the lowing of the water-buffaloes, and the occasional cry of the muezzin calling to prayer from the minaret.

There is no Protestant church and perhaps no Protestant disciple in Pergamos,

but the representatives of the Christians to whom the Revelator wrote belong to the Greek Orthodox faith.

As a last view from the citadel it is pleasing to rest our eyes upon one section of the ancient library, before alluded to, which has been made over into a Christian church, the Church of Saint Antipas. It is an enormous circular church forty-five feet in diameter and over seventy feet high, while the walls are seven feet thick, and there is an opening in the top something like that in the Pantheon at Rome. Let us hope that in this Church of Saint Antipas there may be many Orthodox Greek Christians who, like Antipas of old, are Christ's faithful witnesses, who will receive at last the "hidden manna" and the "white stone with the new name."

CHAPTER V

THYATIRA, THE CITY OF THE IRON ROD AND THE MORNING STAR

At first sight nothing would seem more incongruous than the conjunction of these two figures of speech, the iron rod and the morning star, and yet the promise is given to the faithful in Thyatira that they shall "rule the nations with a rod of iron" and that to them shall be given "the morning star." We may be able to see later the significance of these striking figures.

It cannot be said that the traveller, as he approaches the modern city of Thyatira, or Ak-Hissar (White Castle, in English), as it is called to-day, can see in

this second-rate Turkish town anything to remind him of iron power over the nations or of the brightness of the morning star, for it is mostly built of mud, the streets are narrow and straggling, its bazaar is uninteresting, and it has all the appearance of a decadent but self-satisfied little city whose position in the centre of the long valley that connects the two great valleys of the Hermus and the Lycus gives it a certain amount of business importance which its own enterprise or spirit of progress scarcely deserves.

Now, as always, Thyatira is on an important trade route. Now a branch railway line runs one or two mixed and exceedingly slow trains of freight and passenger cars through the city each day. In the ancient times the caravans of horses and camels brought much business to its doors, as a sort of half-way house between the great capitals of Sar-

Photograph by Mrs. F. E. Clark.

Street in modern Thyatira.

dis and Pergamos. Moreover, in Roman times, when John wrote the message of the Son of God to Thyatira, the city was a station on the imperial post-road that connected Rome with all the great cities of the East.

To-day Pergamos is a mere shadow of its former greatness; Sardis is a heap of ruins buried under a mountain avalanche; Rome is no longer the world's capital, and the great cities of this old post-road are of no consequence as emporiums of trade. In consequence of this, Thyatira has declined with them, for she was always dependent for her prosperity upon her greater and stronger neighbours. And yet we find much that is interesting in one of these back eddies of civilisation such as Thyatira has become.

In going from Smyrna by rail we change cars at Manisa, a place of considerably more importance to-day than Ak-Hissar. Manisa is the old Magnesia, which gave

its name to the magnetic iron which was first found in its vicinity, and hence to our common English word magnet and its derivatives as well as to the well-known drug magnesia.

Two hours by rail from this junction brings us to a substantial stone station across the front of which we read the name "Ak-Hissar." We have come to old Thyatira. One of the broadest streets in Turkey, lined with pleasant trees, leads from the station to the heart of the town half a mile away. There is little of striking and unusual interest to describe in modern Thyatira. It has no great citadel or acropolis as has each one of the other Seven Cities. The little rise of ground which formerly contained the fortifications of the city is now a Turkish gentleman's private grounds. The great cypress-trees are the one redeeming feature which add a touch of beauty to the town.

Some twenty thousand people live in Ak-Hissar to-day, and the nationalities are about equally divided between the Greeks and the Turks. Our hotel is a kind of khan, with a few tolerably clean rooms opening upon a wide courtyard, in the centre of which is a great plane-tree shading an ever-flowing fountain. Horses, goats, camels and donkeys, hens and ducks, and a multitude of doves flying to their windows, share the hospitality of the courtyard with ourselves. Our landlord furnishes only room and bed for the two "pieces of eight" which he charges us, and so we must go out and forage for ourselves for supper. In the straggling bazaar it is not difficult to find sufficient food for a frugal supper, with eggs at ten paras, or one cent, each, small oranges at two for a cent, a large loaf of bread hot from the oven for four cents, and buffalo's milk for three cents a quart.

Commonplace and uninteresting as Thyatira appears at first sight, it is yet a city with a great and varied history. Its position on one of the great commercial routes of the world made it indispensable to the successive rulers of Asia, and yet it was impossible, owing to its exposed situation, in the midst of a fertile valley, with no great citadel and no commanding hills near by, to defend itself from a stronger foe. So, more than almost any city of antiquity, it has been captured and recaptured, destroyed and built up and destroyed again, sacked and pillaged and burned and laid low, and then has risen once more from its ashes.

It was founded first by Seleucus I, one of the greatest generals of Alexander the Great, whose mighty realm stretched far to the eastward from the Hermus valley to the mountains of India. Lysimachus was a contemporary ruler to

the westward, and, in order to defend Thyatira against his invasions, a colony of Macedonian soldiers was established in Thyatira about three hundred years before Christ. But Thyatira was between the upper and nether millstones of Pergamos on the north and the kingdom of the Syrian King on the south and east, and it did not escape the fate of the corn between the millstones.

About the year 190 B. C. it came under the power of Rome, and, though in the days of the Republic it suffered much from oppression and extortion, great commercial prosperity came to it with the inauguration of the Roman Empire. About the time that Saint John wrote the Revelation it was at the height of its wealth and prosperity as a great business city. It is known that there were more trade guilds in Thyatira than in any other city of Asia, for inscriptions tell us that there were guilds of linen-workers,

wool-workers, dyers, bronze-smiths, potters, bakers, tanners, and slave-dealers. The selling of ready-made garments was an important business of Thyatira, but whether there was the accompaniment of Jewish sweat-shops, long hours, and scanty pay, as with us in the same business, we are not told.

There were certainly Jews in Thyatira, however, for Seleucus was always hospitable to this race when he founded a new city. One of these was Lydia, though she was probably a proselyte to the Jewish religion from among the heathen. At any rate, she was a woman of Thyatira and a "seller of purple," and of all the people that ever lived in this ancient city she alone is of special interest to the modern Bible student.

We remember how Paul found her by the riverside in Philippi, when on the Sabbath day he went there to the place "where prayer was wont to be made."

We know how attentive she was to the words of Paul, how she was baptised with her household and "besought" Paul and his companions and even "constrained" them to come into her house and abide. Since Thyatira was settled first by Macedonian soldiers, it was natural that the city should keep up its trade connections with the parent country, and equally natural that Lydia should go there to sell her fine wares.

The purple with which she dyed her linen was made from roots found in the vicinity of Thyatira, where it still grows in abundance. We should scarcely call the colour purple, however, nor does the Greek word indicate the colour which we now know as purple. One of our party obtained a quantity of this madder root in Thyatira, and after boiling it for several hours produced a dye of a rather unsatisfactory reddish colour. Doubtless, had she had Lydia's recipe for making the

dye, the results would have been more satisfactory. It is pleasant to believe, though we have no scriptural authority for it, that the devout Lydia, after she was baptised and had been instructed in Philippi by Paul and Silas and Luke and Timothy, went back to Thyatira and established the church of good works and love and service and faith of which the Revelator speaks.

The fact that the one who sent the message to the church at Thyatira is described as "One with eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet like molten brass," or shining bronze, as it might be translated, reminds us that the bronze-smiths of Thyatira constituted a famous guild. One of the extant coins of the city represents a bronze-worker fashioning a helmet for Minerva. Thus, in every way the message is fitted to the people to whom it is sent.

Modern Ak-Hissar, like ancient Thya-

tira, is still in the midst of a bountiful valley and the fertility of the soil seems unimpaired. Cotton and wheat, maize and olives, still constitute the riches of the city. We made an interesting call on a feudal lord who lives on a low hill commanding the town, the ancient acropolis of Thyatira. The bey is an interesting, well-educated man, belonging to the youngest Young Turk party—that is, the party that protests against the reactionary element of the Young Turks. He lives in a fine stone house, and in his large and well-furnished reception-room he showed us a picture of the landing of King George and Lord Kitchener at Port Said, an event which had just taken place, as well as a statuette of the late King Edward, for he is an admirer of England and her institutions.

In his ample grounds is a large fountain made from an old sarcophagus, covered with an inscription in ancient

Greek which tells us that it was erected in memory of a beloved wife. How little we know and, alas, how little we care for the unknown widower of two thousand years ago and the dear wife whose death caused him so much grief!

Another interesting feature of modern Thyatira is the manufacture of carpets. This is carried on in many rather humble and obscure quarters, but most beautiful fabrics are the output of these factories. The girls who weave them are exceedingly skilful, and they tie and cut the woof of the rugs with motions so rapid that we could not see their hands go back and forth, as when watching the most skilful piano-player the eye is not quick enough to follow his swift motions. A rug that four girls were making, we were told, would sell on the spot for a hundred dollars, but it would take these girls fifteen long days to make it.

Ak-Hissar is in the earthquake re-

Photograph by Mrs. F. E. Clark.

An ancient sarcophagus of Thyatira converted into a fountain. A Turkish bey (or feudal lord), a Greek Protestant pastor, and Dr. Clark. The bey in the centre.

gion, and two years before our visit was terribly shaken. Several minarets were thrown down, and now on the broken fragment the muezzin comes out five times a day to proclaim to the people that "God is great," that "prayer is better than sleep," that "prayer is better than food," and that they should "come to prayer, come to prayer."

Since the message to Thyatira, as to the other churches, was addressed to the "angel," who is supposed to be the minister of the church, it is interesting to know that there is an angel of what we believe to be the true church still in Thyatira. His name is George Prussaevs. He is the pastor of the Protestant Greek Church in this city, the only one of the seven, save Smyrna, that can, so far as we know, boast a single Protestant Christian. He is an earnest, faithful minister of the church, trained in one of the mission theological schools of the

American Board, with a wife who is a true helpmeet and three beautiful little children, Syntiche, Lydia, and Chloe. May the little Lydia of Thyatira, as she grows up, rival in faith and good works the older Lydia, the purple-seller who made her native city famous!

As to the message to the church in Thyatira, it is an obscure and difficult one to interpret, since we know so little of the prevalent customs and heresies of that time. Commentators differ as to the "woman Jezebel," some claiming that she was a heathen priestess who stood for all manner of licentious rites and evil practices, and others that she was the leader of the Nicolaitans, a division of the church that claimed to be none the less Christian because it tolerated some heathen customs, like eating meat offered to idols, offering incense to the statue of the Emperor, joining social clubs, which were numerous in those days and which

often fostered much debauchery and even licentiousness.

Many of these clubs were connected with the trade guilds, and on this account Thyatira, which was famous for these guilds, offered special temptations to the Christians who belonged to them to condone, even if they did not approve of, the unchristian practices of many of the members.

The praise accorded in the first part of the message to the church of Thyatira seems to give colour to this interpretation, for the Son of God himself says: "I know thy works, and love and service and faith, and that thy last works are more than the first." It is thought by many that the Nicolaitans, though their doctrines were wrong, and their compliance with the practices of the heathen neighbours was most dangerous, yet were still active in good works, and perhaps vied with their stricter and more puritanical

church members in acts of benevolence and subscriptions to all good causes, so that the "last works were more than the first."

Nevertheless, the seeds of failure and destruction of the church lay in the laxness of the Nicolaitans. It is the old, ever-recurring struggle of expediency against duty. How far shall we go? how far conform to the world, indulge in their amusements, join their clubs, and live their life? Doubtless, the Nicolaitans had a thousand good reasons, or reasons that seemed to them good, for their doctrines and their manner of life. "They could do more good by remaining in these clubs and exerting a good influence within them." They did not wish to appear "sour" and "strait-laced" and "puritanical." They could perform just as many acts of charity and benevolence as though they were the strictest puritans.

But the Revelator does not accept their excuses or their reasoning. He knows that either the church or the world must prevail, and that to conform to the heathen world is sure death to the church. Therefore, he had "a few things" against the church of Thyatira: it has not cast out the "woman Jezebel," but allows her and her followers to remain in good and regular standing in the church.

A terrible woe is denounced against this woman who called herself a prophetess and was a leader of the Nicolaitans, but not, perhaps, exactly the woe that the words at first blush seem to indicate. The "bed" is supposed to be the couch where, at the club, the revellers reclined while they feasted, and the passage denouncing Jezebel has been freely translated: "I set her on a dining-couch and her vile associates with her. I gave her space to repent and she repented not, and I will kill her disciples with a mys-

terious disease, and all the churches shall know that I am He that searcheth the reins and the heart."

But, in spite of Jezebel and the Nicolaitans, the writer is sure of the final triumph of the church and of the right. Those who have not followed the teachings of Jezebel are not required to leave the world for a hermit's cave, to cut off all intercourse with the heathen, for "no other burden" is put upon them than that which was decided by the Apostles in former days to be absolutely necessary for the preservation of the purity of the church, "that they abstain from fornication and from things offered to idols."

To those who keep themselves pure a glorious reward is promised. Their power shall exceed the power of Rome that ruled over the nations. They, too, shall rule with a rod of iron. Even this divided church in this comparatively obscure and unimportant city of Thyatira

shall triumph, and its faithful members shall become ruling princes with the almighty power of the Father. The contrast between weak Thyatira and this promise of victory and mighty power is all the more striking. But not only shall the faithful have power, but brightness and glory, for the morning star shall be given to them. Obscure, despised, reproached for their puritanism and their separateness, they shall yet shine in the firmament, the observed of all observers. By this beautiful passage we are reminded of the glorious promise of the prophet: "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."

He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

CHAPTER VI

SARDIS, THE BURIED CITY

Of all the Seven Cities of Asia, perhaps Sardis has the most interesting and romantic history, and yet, with all its natural advantages—its wealth, its famous rulers, its wise counsellors, its victorious armies—it was the greatest failure of them all, and its church merited the severest reprimand from the Revelator of any of its sisters. The richest man in the world, Crœsus, had been the King of Sardis; the wisest man, Solon, had been her guest; and yet, as we shall later see, through overconfidence and lack of watchfulness, time and again it was surprised, conquered, and all but destroyed, until at last the disintegrating rock and

soil from its own citadel, loosened by the winter rains and hurled down by destructive earthquakes, buried the city thirty feet deep from the sight of man.

It became a dead city and it was buried by the forces of nature. The church in Sardis seems to have shared the characteristics of the city. It, too, was dead, as we are told, and apparently through lack of watchful care, for, twice over, practically the same message comes to it: "Be watchful; if, therefore, thou shalt not watch I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee." This interesting correspondence between the history of the city of Sardis and the message to the church of Sardis will be understood as the story of the city and of the church is developed.

Sardis was a very old city, far older than Thyatira or Pergamos or even Ephesus. More than three thousand

years ago it was a great city. Before the dawn of recorded time it was very likely inhabited, at least as a robber stronghold, for its original situation made it seemingly impregnable and enabled it to lay all the country round about under tribute. But the day of its greatest glory and splendour did not come until about twenty-five hundred years ago, when Crœsus became its king. He was the more famous son of a famous father, Alyattes. He conquered all the people round about and reigned in unparalleled magnificence in his splendid capital.

Sardis, which had at first been merely the citadel on a steep and almost inaccessible plateau five hundred feet above the plains, had by this time moved down from its lofty perch to the valley below, and palaces and temples and gymnasiums and magnificent private homes made it a metropolis to be spoken of with wonder and respect by all the peoples of the

Sardis. The excavations in April, 1910.

Acropolis, tents of the excavaters, and columns of the Temple of Artemis Pactolus in the foreground.

world. The river Pactolus, renowned for its golden sands, which, according to tradition, Midas, who turned everything that he touched into gold, had enriched as he ploughed his way along its watery flood, ran through the heart of the city.

Crœsus, first of all the kings of antiquity, minted gold and silver coins, which were a medium of exchange both in the East and the West, from Babylonia to Greece. Thus, by his shrewdness, he became the banker of the Occident and the Orient, the Rothschild, the Rockefeller, the J. P. Morgan of his day, all combined into one, for his wealth came not only from the soil but from his shrewdness as a banker and moneylender.

But he was not satisfied with his possessions or glory, and so set out to conquer the Persians. He apparently gave little heed to Solon, the wisest man of Athens, who visited him in Sardis and

told him to beware of overconfidence and not to esteem any man happy until he was dead and his record fully made up.

He consulted the Delphic oracle of Greece, and received the answer, which to him seemed to be reassuring, that if he crossed the Halys he would destroy a mighty empire. Full of assurance of his own resistless might, he did cross the Halys, and a great empire was destroyed but not the empire of Cyrus the Persian, but of Crœsus the Lydian, for after his first victory Cyrus followed it up by boldly attacking Sardis the impregnable. His soldiers, one by one, by digging their toes into the cracks of the rocks, climbed up the almost perpendicular slope of the acropolis, on the side which was thought to be absolutely unscalable and was hence left unguarded, and, to the amazement of the Lydian capital and the surprise of the whole world, Sardis was taken, its multimillionaire king was a prisoner, and

the lingering death of the proud city had begun.

It had revivals, to be sure, as well as reverses, but it never regained the eminence that it enjoyed in the palmy days of Crœsus, and when Saint John wrote the Revelation it was decadent and still decaying, and the church was apparently sharing the fate of the city.

The city still had "a name to live"; it prided itself on its glorious past; it recounted its noble history; it made a plea in the commune of Asia to erect a temple to Tiberius and Livia, his mother.

It had little present power or glory to plead, but only its renowned history, and the judges who had to decide among nine cities that claimed the honour of the temple gave it to Smyrna, the living, instead of Sardis, the dead.

Three centuries after the defeat of Crœsus the city again suffered the same fate through carelessness and overcon-

fidence, for Antiochus surprised and captured it from its reigning king, Achæus, in the same way that the soldiers of Cyrus had done, by stealing into the fortifications after scaling what was believed to be the unscalable mountainside. Sardis had learned nothing by the experience of the past, and still needed the warning words: "Be watchful."

Upon the later history of Sardis we need not dwell. It was a city of considerable importance in the Byzantine times. Its citadel was again a robber fastness in the early Mohammedan rule, but it is now absolutely dead, deserted and buried, for, as has been said, the mountain, which was once its stronghold and citadel, disintegrated in the slow centuries, hastened by earthquakes, fell over in part upon the city it had so long defended, and thirty feet deep beneath the soil Sardis lay for centuries, until recent American excavaters brought its

temples and its tombs again to the light of day.

Yet, among all the cities that I have visited, I know of none which even in its deadness and desolation is of more thrilling interest to the modern traveller. We leave the Ottoman railway at Sardes, as it is called in the time-table, or Sart, as the Turks call it, a hundred and twenty-four kilometres from Smyrna, or about seventy-five miles. There is absolutely nothing at first sight to remind us that there was once a great city with its teeming population in this vicinity.

Few ruins are seen, and those of a comparatively modern date, as we follow the valley of the Pactolus for a mile or more from the railway station; only the blue heavens above, some fleecy clouds that fleck them, and the sun shining in its strength are the same as in the days of Crœsus. Even the everlasting hills have changed their shape, for they are made

up of a friable substance scarcely more solid than hardened mud, and the great acropolis which once terminated in a broad plateau, on which a fortified city could be built, has now been so washed away and overthrown by the convulsions of nature that in places it requires a steady nerve to thread its narrow, roof-like summit. Still, it is a most striking feature of the landscape, more picturesque, possibly, than in the ancient times.

A few ruins of ancient buildings with enormously thick walls are passed; a few miserable huts made of reeds and occupied by Yuruks, the wandering nomads of this country, are seen; the little Pactolus gurgles over its rocky bed on its way to join the Hermus, and the whole scene is one of desolation and untamed nature. Scarcely can the furrow of a plough be seen in any direction as one approaches ancient Sardis. The beautiful anemones and other wild flowers add

their grace to the scene, but there are no touches of man's embellishment.

At last, after walking about a mile, two tall pillars loom upon the sight, and we know that we are approaching the ancient Temple of Cybele, or Artemis, as it is called by more modern explorers. As we draw still nearer a busy scene presents itself to our eyes. Two hundred workmen and more are industriously digging in the sandy soil. A busy little tramway loaded with gravel and loam runs down a slight descent toward the Pactolus by force of gravity, while the empty trucks are pushed back by the sturdy Turkish workmen. Half a dozen American scholars and archæologists and engineers, under the leadership of Professor Butler, of Princeton, are directing the operation. An eighth of a mile away, under the crowning acropolis of old, stands the comfortable house and temporary museum built by these American archæ-

ologists for their occupancy during the years that will be required to dig out this ancient city. All around the ruins are glorious hills. Opposite the acropolis that has played so great a part in the story of Sardis, and perhaps half a mile away, is another great hill of about the same height, which was the necropolis of the ancient city. Here, too, the archæologists are at work and have discovered hundreds of tombs of Lydian and Persian times.

The very day that we reached there a new sarcophagus had been unearthed in the hillside, a Persian sarcophagus of black terra-cotta, beautifully striped and marked and of oblong shape. It was opened, and there, seeing the light of the sun for the first time for thirty-five hundred years, was the body of a Persian girl, perhaps of the period of Cyrus the Great. Her glossy black hair was still perfect, and the jewels and tear-bottles

and vases that were buried with her were unbroken and untarnished. Who wert thou, O maiden of long ago? What was thy name and what was thy story? Who mourned for thee as thou wast laid in thy grave? Did father or mother or brother or lover drop tears on thy beautiful casket? There is no answer to these questions, but our imaginations are stirred as we gaze at the dust of this maiden of the long ago.

Interesting as is this ancient cemetery, yet the chief centre of attraction is in the valley between the acropolis and the necropolis, the citadel and the cemetery, where the busy workmen are revealing day by day the glories of ancient Sardis. The two pillars of which we have already spoken are only samples of scores of others belonging to the same Temple of Artemis which, until the Americans fell to digging them out, were buried many feet beneath the soil. These two only were upright,

with their capitals intact, and stood thirty-five feet above the ground after the storms and earthquakes of a thousand years had done their worst. But even these were half buried, for almost thirty-five feet below the surface the workmen had to dig before they reached the foundation of these pillars of the mighty temple, each one of which stood sixty-nine feet above the floor of the temple and each one of which was six feet in diameter.

The other pillars are only partially intact, and some of them entirely prostrate, with their enormous drums or sections scattered about in every direction. This temple was probably built in the time of Alexander the Great, about 350 B. C., or perhaps only repaired in his time, for he was one of the conquerors of this often-conquered city. Indeed, the temple seems to have been undergoing extensive repairs when it was completely

Photograph by Mrs. F. E. Clark.

The old aqueduct of Sarlis, part of which fell and buried the city in 17 B. C. House of the American excavaters at the right.

destroyed in the year 17 A. D., for some of the great columns are not yet fluted, showing that they were still unfinished.

But more marvellous still are the ruins of a temple found in a yet lower stratum, and built not of marble, like the one I have described, but of a coarser, darker stone. This is believed to be, without question, a temple of Crœsus, the most famous of the many kings of Sardis.

Everything of value found here must, according to the agreement, be sent to Constantinople, but temporarily they are stored in the little museum under the steep acropolis. Here are many curious things—alabaster vases so thin that they could easily be crushed in the hand like an egg-shell. Just such a vase Mary Magdalene broke when she bathed her Lord's feet with the precious ointment. Great earthen jars used for the ashes and the charred bones of the dead who had been cremated are found here. Mar-

ble slabs are here covered with Lydian inscriptions which cannot yet be translated, for no one is yet wise enough to read the ancient Lydian, though the letters are as sharp and clear-cut as though chiselled yesterday. I cannot describe these remarkable finds at length, nor would I if I could, for that honour and privilege must be given to the patient excavaters whose monograph on the ancient Sardis will be awaited with the utmost interest by scholars in many lands.

One of the most marvellous sights that the traveller sees from the hills of Sardis is the Bin Tepe, or the plain of a thousand mounds, where the kings and priests and great men of Lydia were buried, not in the hillside necropolis which I have already described, but in a great, wide plain some two hours' ride from Sardis.

Some of these mounds, or tumuli, are enormous in extent, one of them being

Sardis. The excavations as they are to-day.

larger than the Pyramid of Ghizeh in Egypt. There are not a thousand of these tombs, but, to be more exact, about six hundred and sixty-six of them. The largest is that of the great King Alyattes, which Herodotus minutely describes. This is circular in form and twelve hundred feet in diameter. As one looks through the cleft of the mountains that hem in Sardis, it seems as if this plain were dotted with green hills, some of them of a considerable height, but each one of them is a single tomb of one of the great men of the mighty kingdom of Lydia.

Such are the scenes, picturesque and striking, but, at the same time, desolate and depressing, which strike the traveller as he visits the dead and buried city of Sardis. What is the message sent by "Him that hath the seven spirits of God and the seven stars"?

It is the saddest of all the seven mes-

sages. The Revelator knows the works of the church, but has no word of praise for them, as he had for the church of Ephesus, though in many respects the messages to these two churches are much the same. Sardis had not only left its first love, as had Ephesus, but it was dead, though it had a name to live. The church was an empty organisation without life. It had wheels within wheels, perhaps, but no living spirit within the wheels. Even the church at Pergamos that dwelt beside "Satan's Seat" was praised for holding fast the holy name and for not denying the faith; but there was no faithful martyr Antipas in Sardis to receive such praise.

Yet, though the church as a church was dead, like many another church, alas, far away from Sardis, there were a few names even there that had not defiled their garments. Some things remained even in a dead church, as to-day

a faithful and scanty minority may keep alive in their own heart the love of Christ even when they cannot revive the church of which they are members. Twice over to the faithful few came the message: "Be watchful!" Even as the citadel of Sardis was surprised and taken twice over and two great dynasties overthrown for lack of watchfulness, so the faithful ones are exhorted to watch that they may save at least their own souls and at last be worthy to walk with the Son of Man in white.

To these few came even a more beautiful and consoling message than to any other church of the seven. These few that have overcome shall be clothed in white garments, like the pure white toga worn by Roman citizens on days of triumph as they walked through the streets of Rome, following the victorious general who had come with trophies won in battle over a foreign foe.

So the faithful ones of Sardis shall triumph though the dead church shall be blotted out and buried. The kingdom of our Lord will win the day, though a church here and there may become utterly extinct. Though a church lose even its name to live and be buried deep as the temples of Sardis, yet, if there is but one faithful soul who has not defiled his garments, he shall triumph in the end and walk in the white procession of victory, for the kingdom of God cannot suffer defeat whatever may be true of the individual church.

This lesson also is for us and for all time. It is a lesson which every church may well take to heart. Every individual Christian whose name, like those of the faithful few in Sardis, is written in the Book of Life may be sure that it will not be blotted out.

It is interesting to note that a remnant professing a purer religion than the

Mohammedans around them still survives in the plain of the Hermus, which was once part of the dominion of Sardis. We are told that their women usually bear Christian names. They practise monogamy and divorce is not permitted, and they violate many Mohammedan precepts. It is believed by those who know them best that they would become Christians if such a change of faith did not mean instant death by the Mohammedans, who consider them as belonging to one of their own sects.

There is, moreover, in this same plain a settlement of Slavs from Russia who preserve at least the Christian name, and among these people, too, we would fain see the present-day remnant of the ancient church of Sardis.

A dozen filthy Turkish huts, the only native village near the site of ancient Sardis, serve to emphasise the fact that the ancient city of wealth and magnifi-

cence is dead; but its desolation also brings out in clearer light and more vividly the promise to those who overcame, who are clothed in white garments, and whose names will never be blotted out of the Book of Life.

CHAPTER VII

PHILADELPHIA, THE CITY OF THE OPEN DOOR

In our journey to the Seven Cities of Asia we approached Philadelphia from the great table-lands that cover a large part of the interior of Asia Minor and which lie for the most part to the north and east of the Seven Cities. Very early on a crisp winter morning we had left Ushak and its unspeakable hotel for a railway journey that takes one over as wild and picturesque a region as he is likely to find in the five continents.

Ushak itself is by no means uninteresting; the minarets of the mosques are tipped with metal, and as we left the little city they glittered in the light of

the sun's earliest rays. Barley, wheat, and opium grow in the rich red earth of this district, and it is especially famous as the headquarters of the kind of heavy carpets which we call Turkish carpets. These are largely made in private houses and some thousands of women and girls are employed as weavers, while the men wash and dye the wool. Since carpet-weaving is the chief mechanical business of this region and is a recognised industry of at least three of the Seven Cities, Smyrna, Thyatira, and Philadelphia, it may interest my readers if I quote a paragraph or two to show, a little more at length than in a former chapter, how these carpets are made.

"Imagine a large bare room in a private house; in front of us is a great frame, perhaps twenty feet in width; in front of the frame are seated half a dozen women and girls whose deft fingers fly in and out like lightning as they break

off two or three inches of yarn from several bunches of different colours that hang over their heads. With incredible activity they knot this little piece of yarn to one of the threads of the web, choosing with marvellous exactness the right shade to match the pattern that is before them. So rapidly do their fingers move that one can scarcely follow them as with all the skill and exact precision of a practised piano-player they break off and tie the little piece of yarn, reach for another of a different colour, break it off and knot it, keeping up this exacting task for hours at a time, until one aches in sympathy with the tired hands that are flying in and out in front of the great frame to make the carpet which will soon be trodden by profane and dirty feet.

"After a little of the wool has been knotted to the web it is combed out and cut even with large shears, and then pounded down with a peculiar-shaped

hammer; and yet the most that a skilful woman can weave in a long day's work is only about ten inches of a carpet two feet wide. The most important of the colouring matter used is obtained from the madder root, which grows abundantly in all this region as well as about Thyatira, and is doubtless, as we have seen, the colour with which Lydia dyed her so-called purple. Of late years the aniline dyes have largely supplanted the old Turkey red produced from the madder root, the indigo which came from India, and the cochineal from the Indies, greatly to the deterioration of the carpets and the loss of the carpet-buying public."

But we are on our way to Philadelphia and cannot linger long among the carpet looms of Ushak. Soon after leaving that little city our road begins to wind down-hill, for Ushak is three thousand feet and more above the sea, while Ala

Shehr, as the ancient Philadelphia is now called, is only a few hundred feet above the sea. During the last part of the journey to Philadelphia the descent is very rapid, and the scenery grows every moment more wild and rugged. Through tunnel after tunnel the train shoots, while far down below us we can see a great plain covered with curious columns and mounds of soft rock, which have been sculptured by the storms of many winters into all sorts of curious shapes.

At last the foot of the hill is reached and we come to the valley of the Cogamus, a tributary of the greater Hermus. After the magnificent views which the valley of the Hermus affords and of the magnificent Boz Dagh the Cogamus valley seems rather tame, but Philadelphia itself is relieved by some fine mountains of the Tmolus range which form a splendid background for the ancient city.

A walk of half a mile or thereabouts

from the railway station brings us into the heart of the modern city of Ala Shehr, which, though by no means remarkable for cleanliness, is yet one of the most attractive and well-kept of the Turkish cities of the interior. As we approach the city we see a rapid stream, two or three feet wide, tumbling riotously down the main street over the sharp cobblestones, and spanned every now and then by a board a foot wide for the benefit of pedestrians. This water comes from the hills and is on its way to the vineyards on the other side of the city.

When one series of vineyards has been irrigated the water is turned into another street, and beyond that, irrigates other acres of vines, for Ala Shehr is famous to-day, as was Philadelphia in the olden times, for its grapes and its wine, which Strabo eulogised two thousand years ago.

Ancient volcanoes are not far away to the east and the north, and, as we shall

see later, Philadelphia has suffered terribly from earthquakes, due perhaps to the proximity of these volcanoes. But some compensation has been afforded in the volcanic tufa the craters have vomited forth and which in the course of the ages has made the fertile soil in which the vines, the almond, and the peach abundantly flourish.

It was winter when we left the table-lands about Ushak in the early morning; it was late in the spring when we reached Ala Shehr a few hours later; the almond-trees flourished, and the cherries and peaches were great bouquets of pink-and-white bloom.

There is little of special interest to the modern traveller in the Philadelphia of to-day except as everything reminds him of the city of the Revelator. In Sardis and Pergamos the patient pick and spade of the excavater have laid bare the ancient glories of these magnificent cities.

But in Philadelphia scarcely a sod has been turned by the archæologist, except where a cellar has been dug for some modern house and a few treasures of ancient times have been unearthed.

Yet the every-day life of these modern cities of the Orient is always of interest to the traveller. Toward sunset great herds of ugly black water-buffaloes stumble bellowing through the streets, driven usually by a small boy perched on a donkey's back. The public bakeries are found in almost every street, and, making their way toward these bakeries, one often sees a line of women with long wooden trays filled with unbaked loaves which will be thrust far into the capacious mouth of the public oven. The Greek women can be distinguished from the Turkish women by their unveiled faces, but you will see no Jews in Ala Shehr, because its market-day, when almost all the trading is done, comes on

Photograph by Mrs. F. E. Clark.

Some of the very few objects as yet discovered at Philadelphia—ancient Greek funeral monuments.

Saturday, and it would be a profanation for a devout Jew to buy or sell or get gain on the Sabbath day.

Possibly the shrewd Greeks, who number about five thousand out of twenty thousand men, women, and children of modern Philadelphia, have decreed that the Jewish Sabbath shall be their market-day for the express purpose of excluding the Hebrews from their city.

One of the most interesting and beneficent natural products of Ala Shehr is a splendid spring of mineral water, famous from the time of the Apostles. The spring rises a mile from the city and is brought in pipes to a modest hydropathic establishment near the town, where the water is bottled in large quantities and sent all over Asia Minor. It is a refreshing, tonicky water, something like Apollinaris, and is an untold boon to travellers in Asia Minor, since it can be had in almost every town of any size

where the ordinary water is filled with all sorts of dangerous microbes and is undrinkable by the stranger.

Though almost no excavation work has been done in Philadelphia, there are many indications that it would be most rewarding could any one be found with time and money to unearth the buried treasures. In digging the foundations for a Greek school an ancient Greek cemetery was discovered with many beautiful stelæ, funeral urns, and mourning figures; these are preserved in one of the rooms of the school, which appeared to be an admirable institution for so remote a town.

We were told that in a vineyard near by the workmen who were setting out vines had recently fallen through the earth into some large underground chambers. Going out to the vineyard, we found that the rumour was true, and here, a few feet under the surface, were

Ancient sarcophagus at Philadelphia made into a fountain. Two eminent missionaries, Dr. and Mrs. Riggs, standing at either side.

arches of brick and stone and chambers with mural decorations still fresh, though the painter had been dead perhaps for two thousand years. Wreaths of flowers tied with ribbons seemed to be the chief decorations for these chambers, which perhaps were sepulchres of the olden times, though so far as I know no one has yet discovered their use.

The ruins of Philadelphia are few and uninteresting, and I was not able to discover the great pillar which some modern commentators declare is to be found there, reminiscent of the pillar spoken of in the Revelation. The most interesting Greek church which we visited contains a picture of the Revelator's vision, painted by an artist whose name and fame have been forgotten in the long passage of the centuries. It represents our Lord in the midst of the "seven golden candlesticks" clothed with a long garment down to his feet and girt about with

a golden girdle. In his right hand were the seven stars, and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword. In various corners of the picture were the seven churches, some of which looked not unlike old New England meeting-houses, while at the bottom of the picture, under the feet of his Lord, lay the prostrate John. The crude literalism of the painting was most interesting, especially as one viewed it in one of the Seven Cities to which He wrote who had in His right hand seven stars, out of whose mouth went a sharp, two-edged sword, whose countenance was as the sun shining in his strength, and before whom the Revelator fell at his feet as dead.

Ala Shehr rises from the plain through which the railway runs and largely covers the slope of a commanding hill from the top of which a splendid view can be obtained. Between this hill and the Tmolus is a deep valley, and up the long cleft of

the Hermus to the table-land of Asia Minor the eye is never tired of gazing, so charming is the scene. It was this situation that gave to the Philadelphia of old its importance and its unique interest. This long valley of which it seemed to be the guardian was the open door to Phrygia and all the region beyond, and the most striking figure of the sacred message to this church is derived from this thought of Philadelphia as "the open door which no man could shut" to the regions beyond.

Sir William Ramsay designates it as the "missionary city," because it was established by its founder, Attalus II, about a century and a half before Christ, to become the centre of Græco-Asiatic civilisation, to spread the knowledge of the Greek language and customs throughout the eastern part of Lydia, where it was situated, and far on into Phrygia. It was a missionary city, he says, from the

beginning, founded to promote a certain unity of spirit, customs, and loyalty within the realm, the apostle of Hellenism in an Oriental land.

It was a successful teacher. Before A. D. 19 the Lydian tongue had ceased to be spoken in Lydia and Greek was the only language of the country. We have already seen in our chapter about Sardis how completely the Greek language had supplanted the Lydian, and the Lydian tablets which have recently been discovered by the American archæologists are still untranslatable, so completely did Philadelphia do its missionary work and make the Greek language and literature and spirit dominant throughout all the land.

The beautiful name *Philadelphia* was derived from the founder of the city, Attalus Philadelphus, who was so called because of his marked affection and loyalty to his brother Eumenes. On the

ancient coins of Philadelphia are shown the two brothers exactly alike in limb and feature and garb, an identity which symbolised their mutual unity and affection. One of these coins represents them as looking upon the genius of Ephesus as she carries an image of her own goddess Diana toward her temple. This coin was struck to commemorate the alliance of Philadelphia and Ephesus.

I have already said that Philadelphia occupied a strategic position at the entrance to the long Hermus valley, and that it was the open door to all the region beyond. It was also on the imperial post-road which, starting from Rome, crossed Italy, the Adriatic, Macedonia, and the Ægean, and then, after reaching Asian soil, went by way of Troas, Pergamos, and Sardis, through Philadelphia and on to the far East. So by nature, as well as by the works of man (and for nothing were the Romans more famous

than for their magnificent post-roads), Philadelphia was the "open door" to the more undeveloped peoples in the far region eastward.

Another event in the history of Philadelphia must be recorded before we can fully understand the message of the Revelator. In the year seventeen of the Christian era occurred a terrible earthquake. We have already noted how it destroyed the great Temple of Artemis in Sardis, built by Alexander the Great. Sardis was perhaps the more completely ruined in this awful cataclysm, but twelve other cities were also destroyed; one of these was Philadelphia.

Strabo tells us that in some respects Philadelphia was the worst sufferer of all, since for several years after the earthquake the earth tremors continued, making it unsafe to live within the confines of the city, so that the great majority of the inhabitants moved away or estab-

lished themselves in tents in the surrounding country. Every one who chose to live in Philadelphia at this period was considered a fool by outsiders, just as we wonder to-day how the natives in the region of Vesuvius can build their houses and plant their vineyards time after time on the slopes of the mountain which has so often poured forth its burning lava and swallowed up the farms, the homes, and people who trustingly built their houses upon its side.

The whole earthquake region on the edge of which Philadelphia was situated was called Katakekaumene, or Burnt District. The Emperor Tiberius, who was then upon the throne, provided liberally from the royal treasury for Philadelphia and the other ruined cities, and in memory of his generosity the Philadelphians took another name and called their city Neokaisareia, the New Cæsar. A temple was also built in honour

of the Emperor, but whether of Tiberius or Germanicus, his son, is not quite certain. However, this temple and the new name of the city apparently did not last long. It soon resumed its ancient and more mellifluous name, and the new temple, it is thought, soon fell into decay.

Now we can understand, perhaps, more clearly the message of the Spirit unto the church of Philadelphia. He who wrote it was the holy and the true, the one who had the key of David, the one who openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth. His very title evidently refers to the open door, which in the next verse he says he has set before the church of Philadelphia.

The open door was a familiar metaphor to the Christians of Saint John's time. Saint Paul used it over and over again. At Ephesus he tells us a "great door and effectual" is opened to him. At Troas, too, a door was opened, and the

Colossians were asked to pray that God may "open unto us a door for the word of utterance to speak the mystery of Christ." Though the church has only a little strength, no man can shut this door of opportunity. It is interesting to note that no word of even implied censure is spoken to the church of Philadelphia. It shares this distinction with Smyrna alone, and it seems no mere coincidence, in spite of the ridicule that Mark Twain cast upon the idea, that these two cities alone of all the seven have maintained continuously the worship of Christ through all the centuries since this letter was written, while the others have been given wholly over to the worship of the Turks.

"Because thou didst keep the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of trial," says the Revelator. The Philadelphians, indeed, knew what the hour of trial was: the terrible earth-

quake, the ruin of the city, its bad name as an unsafe place for residence—which adhered to it, perhaps, until the time that this letter was written, for during many years the inhabitants dared not live within the confines of the city but camped out in the open fields.

All these memories were fresh at this time and gave new significance to the beautiful promise to him that overcometh: "I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go out thence no more." No longer in the new Jerusalem the inhabitants would have to leave an earthquake-shaken city, but he would be established as a pillar immovable in the holy temple, and upon him would be written a new name. On the pillars of the temple dedicated to the Roman Emperor was doubtless written the new name of Philadelphia, Neokaisareia, but neither this name nor the temple on which it was engraved lasted

long, but the name in the temple of the new Jerusalem would endure for ever.

The later history of Philadelphia was worthy of its early promise and of the cordial commendatory words of the Spirit. It long maintained itself as a Christian city when all the rest of Asia Minor had yielded to the Turk. It endured siege after siege. It was defended with heroic valour by its Christian inhabitants. They endured starvation, massacre, almost annihilation before at last they yielded to the Seljukian Turks toward the end of the fourteenth century, hundreds of years after the companion cities had been conquered. Even the cool-blooded and often contemptuous Gibbon is aroused to something like enthusiasm as he contemplates the heroism of the early Philadelphians, and we may well close this story of the City of the Open Door with his eulogy:

"In the loss of Ephesus the Christians deplored the fall of the first angel, the

extinction of the first candlestick of the Revelation. . . . The circus and three stately theatres of Laodicea are now peopled with wolves and foxes; Sardis is reduced to a miserable village; the God of Mahomet without a rival or a son is invoked in the mosques of Thyatira and Pergamos, and the populousness of Smyrna is supported by the foreign trade of Franks and Armenians. Philadelphia alone has been saved by prophecy or courage. . . . Among the Greek colonies and churches of Asia, Philadelphia is still erect, a column in a scene of ruins, a pleasing example that the paths of honour and safety may sometimes be the same."

CHAPTER VIII

LAODICEA THE LUKEWARM

I HAVE considered the Seven Cities of Asia in the order in which they are given in the book of Revelation, but the order in which the modern traveller naturally visits them is to combine in one excursion the first and the last, Ephesus and Laodicea, for these two cities are upon the same line of railway—a well-managed English line that runs southeast from Smyrna. If we examine a map of the ancient province of Asia which occupied the western part of Asia Minor in Roman times we shall see that a line drawn through the Seven Cities forms an irregular, oblong figure with Pergamos at

its northern point, Smyrna and Ephesus on the extreme western edge, Thyatira, Sardis, and Philadelphia on the north-east, and Laodicea at the extreme south-eastern point. The distance, in a straight line between Ephesus and Pergamos, is something over a hundred miles. Ephesus is some forty miles from Smyrna and about eighty miles from Laodicea.

While no one of the Seven Cities is, as the crow flies, more than two-score miles from one of its neighbours, the extent of the country occupied by these cities is very considerable.

The journey from Ephesus to Laodicea is a most interesting one. Throughout the whole distance it follows the valley of the Meander or its scarcely less celebrated tributary the Lycus, which joins the Meander shortly before we get to Laodicea. This is the greatest fig region in the world, for most of the celebrated Smyrna figs come from the Meander

valley, and throughout almost its whole length we see the beautiful, shapely trees, with their smooth white bark, which have contributed throughout all the ages so much to the wealth of the province. Cotton and tobacco and maize are also raised in this fertile valley. We look with constant interest upon the crooked Meander, which winds in and out throughout the whole length of the valley. Visions of college classics, of the mythical stories of childhood, are brought to our minds by every turn of the meandering stream, and its banks in the springtime, bright with millions of gorgeous anemones, make it seem the fit abiding-place for the spirits and sprites with which mythology peopled its banks.

Every town at which our train stops beckons to us to leave the cars and pay it a visit, for each one is full of classic interest. But we cannot linger to see the ruins of old Magnesia, so old that it

was destroyed by Cimmerians more than twenty-five hundred years ago, or Tralles, where the great Attalus once had his palaces, or Sultan Hissar, where Strabo, the historian, to whom we are so much indebted for our knowledge of ancient men and manners, once went to school. The modern Turkish names of many of these stations on the way to Laodicea are most interesting; for instance, *Balachik* means "Little Place up Above"; *Deirmanjak* means "Dear Little Mill"; while a station still farther south, called *Kuyukak*, means "Dear Little Well."

At last, after a journey which had taken nearly the whole day, though we had covered less than a hundred miles from Ephesus, the conductor calls out, "Gonjeli," and we know that we have reached the station at the foot of the great hill which is covered with the ruins of Laodicea, where once was a proud, rich city and a church which received the

most scathing rebuke of any which was spoken by the Spirit to any one of the Seven Churches of Asia.

Laodicea, like Philadelphia, was a City of the Open Door. It was founded by Antiochus III some two hundred and fifty years before Christ as a guardian of the great road from Smyrna and Ephesus to the Meander valley, to Phrygia and to the uplands of Anatolia. It had a commanding position on the lower valley of the Lycus, and all the merchandise and all the soldiers and their equipments, and all the officials of the Greek and Roman empires, in their turn, had to pass through this great city on their way to the far East or on their return from the interior of Asia.

To be sure, the important highway that passed through Philadelphia reached, in a measure, the same back country, but the pass to the uplands which was guarded by Laodicea was less steep and rugged

than the road beyond Philadelphia, and the natural advantages were apparently altogether with the former city. By reason of these advantages Laodicea grew rich and prosperous. It became famous for its banking-houses and its millionaires, but with all its wealth and prosperity it did not perform its mission as well as poor Philadelphia. It seems to have made little impression on the Phrygian tribes and to have accomplished little for the introduction of the Greek language and civilisation in which Philadelphia was so successful.

Laodicea was especially famous for two things, its wool and its medicine. A peculiar kind of sheep with long, soft, glossy black wool had long been bred in this neighbourhood. The secret of raising this breed of sheep has now been lost, but in the days of Saint John this glossy wool, which came from Laodicea and was there woven into beautiful and

costly garments, was famous throughout the world.

The city was also famous for its physicians and its medicines. An especial and noted school of medicine flourished in Laodicea. We are told "that this school of physicians followed the teachings of Herophilos, who lived about three hundred years before Christ, and who, on the principle that compound diseases require compound medicines, began that strange system of heterogeneous mixtures, some of which have only lately been expelled from our own pharmacopœia."

The fearful and wonderful combination of drugs given by some modern doctors would seem to indicate that they still belong to this school of Laodicea. One of the medicines for which Laodicea was famous was an ointment for "strengthening the ears," whatever that may mean, while another medicine of

still more interest to the student of Revelation was the "Phrygian powder," made in part from a peculiar kind of stone pressed into tabloids, afterward powdered and mixed with some ingredient, to be rubbed on the eye as a cure for the various diseases which afflict the optics in Eastern countries. The world-famous Galen speaks of both these remedies in his pharmacopœia.

Another far more useful medicine, which, so far as we know, Galen does not mention, also grows now and probably in his time grew in great abundance about Laodicea. This is the humble licorice root which is exported in large quantities from all this region. One of the commonest sights about Laodicea in the spring of the year is a company of veiled Turkish women pulling the long roots of licorice which grow wild and in great abundance, and which will afterward be chewed with supreme delight by

small boys in many parts of the world and will also be made up into powder for medicinal purposes.

On this great hill, whose base the railway now skirts, once stood the proud and wealthy city of Laodicea. Its banks, its woollen factories, its medical schools, its impregnable fortifications, its great garrisons of soldiers, were famous in all the region round about. The great men of the world visited it. Its products were sought for in the bazaars of all the nations. It was "rich and increased with goods and had need of nothing." But what do we see to-day? It is the most desolate and God-forsaken of all the Seven Cities. Even Sardis, though quite as dead, is far more interesting to the traveller. The barren, utterly deserted hill on which Laodicea stood rises above the mean little Turkish village of Eski Hissar and contains not a single inhabitant. No wandering shepherd, even,

pastures his flocks among the ruins; no living creature picks a scanty subsistence from between the rocks which strew the ground so thickly that scarcely a blade of grass can grow.

At least, this was the impression that we received when late on the day of our arrival at the ruins we made our way over the historic blocks of marble and granite and tried to reproduce in our imagination the ancient glories of Laodicea which have for ever passed away. Its former greatness, however, is shown by its ruins. They cover hundreds of acres, and though they have been quarried for a thousand years by all the villagers round about, who have built their walls, their houses, and their pigsties from the marbles of the ancient city, yet there is good building material enough left to erect another city to-day on the site of the ancient metropolis.

Here are the ruins of a mighty temple.

Ruins of the fortress of Laodicea.

Some of its stones I measured, and found them to be four feet long and three feet thick. There are the ruins of a noble aqueduct which brought water from a hill miles away through a valley which lies between the Hill of Fountains and Laodicea, and then carried the water by a siphon system, which would do credit to any modern hydraulic engineer, to the top of a large stone tower, part of which is still standing with the pipes yet visible which tell of ancient Laodicea's splendid water-works. But this aqueduct also tells of Laodicea's weakness, for all the water had to be brought from a distance, and in the case of war with a determined enemy, though the pipes were brought underground much of the way, a water famine in Laodicea would soon be threatened.

But what impressed me most were the vast theatres and the stadium, for they seemed to tell more of the character of

the people than any of the other ruins. The two theatres are still in a very fair state of preservation. Many of the stone seats are still in place. Each one is built in a natural amphitheatre, and I estimated that together they would seat from fifty to seventy thousand people. The great stadium, where the athletic events took place, was also an enormous affair, whose outlines are plainly visible. Many of the seats of the stadium are also still in place, and on pacing its length I found it to be at least half as long again as the magnificent stadium in Athens, which seats ninety thousand people. Probably not less than one hundred and fifty thousand people could find seats in this mighty amphitheatre.

And yet Laodicea was not a world metropolis. Though prosperous and populous, it was still a small city as compared with the great capitals of antiquity. Do not these great theatres and this

mighty stadium give us one clew to the degeneration of Laodicea, and the severity of the message which the Spirit sent to the angel of its church?

It was evidently a pleasure-loving city, whose places of amusement provided seats at one time for all the inhabitants of the city and the surrounding country. They would not have been built on this immense scale were they not well patronised. The theatres of a city tell of its character, as well as its churches.

The only relief which the traveller finds in visiting Laodicea he gains from the mighty mountains of God which surround it. Snow-clad hills eight thousand and ten thousand feet high keep guard over the city to the south. In no other part of Asia Minor did we see more magnificent mountains. One of our party described them as rising in tiers one behind the other, peering over each other's shoulders as they seemed to gaze down

upon the doomed city which was once so proud and self-satisfied. It had all that heart could wish. Money flowed into it from all quarters. The Phrygians contributed their share; from Ephesus and Smyrna came golden stores; its glossy black sheep were found nowhere else and greatly contributed to its wealth; its medicines were believed in implicitly and were sought by the credulous from all parts of the world.

And yet it made no great impression, morally or religiously, upon the people round about it. It was not a missionary city like Philadelphia; it did not enter the open door which was placed before it; it seems to have done little or nothing to civilise the rude tribes of the uplands though the road to them led past its very gates. It was content to make money and to care for its own interests.

In the reign of Nero it was shaken by a tremendous earthquake and partially de-

stroyed, but it was too proud to receive aid from the government or from the neighbouring cities as other municipalities had done under like circumstances. It took care of its own destitute people and managed its own affairs, apparently neither borrowing from nor lending to others.

And yet, so far as we know, it was not an unusually wicked city. It was not famed for its licentiousness or its roguery, as were some of the other cities of the Roman Empire. It had a good name in the commercial world. It paid its bills and set a good example of law and order, but it missed the highest aims. It apparently had no great ideals. Money-making and money-spending satisfied it. The Christians of the city evidently fell into the same complacent, self-satisfied attitude as the rest of the people. They were content to let well enough alone, and to seek not first the kingdom of God

and his righteousness, but their own ease and comfort and wealth.

Because of this came to them the scathing rebuke of the Revelator, and because of this the very name of their city has become a reproach and a byword throughout the world. A Laodicean is one of the meanest types of mankind. He is neither cold nor hot; he has lost his enthusiasm; he has no great purpose except to be comfortable, and so he causes the man of fine moral purpose to spew him out of his mouth.

The seventeenth verse of the third chapter of Revelation describes the attitude of the Laodiceans. "I am rich," they say, "and increased with goods and have need of nothing." But the Spirit said to them: "Thou art wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked." Physical repletion and moral emptiness; material wealth and spiritual poverty: that was the character of Laodicea.

But evidently their case was not quite hopeless. They were counselled to buy true gold, gold which would make them rich in spirit rather than in purse, and white raiment, the robe of righteousness, that they might be clothed, instead of the glossy black cloth made from their famous wool, and eye-salve which would open their spiritual eyes instead of the Phrygian powder which might benefit their weak physical sight.

In this message, as in every other, the Spirit fits his words of warning to the peculiar circumstances of the church to which he writes, and none more exactly suits the circumstances of the time and place than the warning to the lukewarm city.

Now we come to the end of the messages of the Seven Cities. There are but four verses more. Sir William Ramsay considers them as an epilogue which applies not to Laodicea but to all the

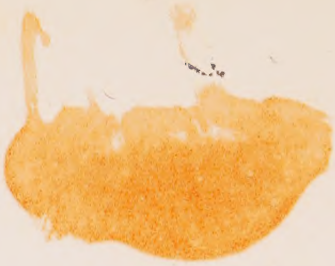
churches. "All reference to the Laodiceans has ceased," he says, "and the writer is drifting further and further away from them." However, since that is a matter of opinion, I prefer to believe that these later and more hopeful words of the chapter apply to the Laodiceans as well as to the other churches: "As many as I love I rebuke and chasten." Surely the Laodiceans were chastened in the years that follow. Though their love had grown cold and their zeal feeble, yet the Master says: "Behold I stand at the door and knock." There was still a chance for the church of Laodicea to open the door of its heart to him that he might come in and sup. There was still a chance for them to repent and overcome and to sit with him on his throne.

Many a tribulation came to the city in later years, earthquake shock and fire and siege; and for long it held out against the Mohammedans, as did its sister city

Philadelphia, though not so long nor so courageously as did that valiant town. We read of another city in this same region, Eumeneia by name, which endured great persecution. In its days of prosperity it was much like Laodicea itself. Christians accepted the Greek culture, accommodating themselves to the life of the times, apparently in no very heroic spirit, but when the persecutions of the early part of the fourth century arose, the last great Christian persecution, the people all gathered in the church, contrary to the imperial edict. A battalion of Roman soldiers surrounded the church. They offered to spare the lives of the Christians if they would recant, but not one accepted the proposal. Every one clung to his faith and all were burned with the church in which they had taken refuge.

May we not also hope that in the neighbouring city of Laodicea the luke-

warm Christians, aroused by the message of the Revelator, rebuked by his stinging reproaches, chastened by misfortune, repented and renewed their zeal, opened the door for the Master's entrance, and finally were among those who overcame the lukewarmness of the past, the disadvantages of an easy prosperity, and at last "sat down with Him on His throne" because they had heard and heeded what the Spirit said unto the churches?



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